Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Elderly-Friendly Interior Design

• Author(s) Name:
Chandni Luhadiya

• University or Company Affiliation:
University of Alberta

• Abstract (300 words):
The world’s population is aging. In most countries, around 20% of the population is elderly. As people grow old, they experience the effects of the normal aging process like loss of strength, visual impairment etc. Moreover, most of the adults prefer to spend their life as long as possible in the same house where they have been living for years instead of moving to an assisted living space. This gives rise to the need for designing homes which could allow the elders to remain in the same house independently, safely and happily. The purpose of this study is to investigate how interior design can develop a user-friendly, safe and attractive space which can enhance the quality of life of senior citizens. The objective of this research is to contribute to existing literature and guide future research on indoor comfort for the elderly. This paper focuses on ways of reducing issues faced by elders due to two effects of aging which are mobility and psychology through interior design elements. Although there are many elements in interior design, this study is narrowed down to analyze on how lighting, furniture, flooring and staircases impact on mood, wellbeing and efficiency of seniors and how these elements can enhance the quality of life amongst elders. The analysis has been done by researching on the existing design solutions provided by architects and designers for elderly, by reviewing existing
literature on design, by visiting retirement living community, by interviewing the seniors and speaking to rehabilitation professionals. This research helped in understanding the gaps in the current design trends and gave directions for future possibilities. The study revealed the need of alternative and collaborative design approach for designing for senior living and proposes areas for future research.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Chandni Luhadiya is currently pursuing a Masters in Industrial Design (Thesis) at the University of Alberta (UofA). She is researching on how design thinking can help non-profit organizations in enhancing the customer experience and in increasing the donors. She has received full scholarship for her Masters in the form of Graduate Assistantships at UofA. Her academic standing has been excellent till now with GPA 3.9. Moreover, she has been recently awarded a Graduate Fellowship by UofA for her current project of reclaiming the identity of a historical building in Edmonton. With a keen interest in combining design and psychology, she is also researching on how Interior designers can use neuroscience to maximize the impact of their ideas and build a long term relationship with their target audience. Chandni is also a Design consultant at Restoration Hardware, which is a luxury brand in the home furnishings industry.

In the past, she has obtained an undergraduate degree in Interior Design & a post-graduate diploma in Interior and Furniture design. With an extensive background and passion for Interior design, she strives to enhance the quality of life of people through interior design.