

The Place to Celebrate Individuality : A study of personalization in secondary territory space of residential homes for older people

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Introduction

Excursion Retrospective

Process

To understand the target group, me and my research partner Mark Neuteboom had the opportunity to stay in an elderly home for excursion purpose for five days from September 20th to September 24, thanks to the help of Habion, a housing association that focuses in housing the elderly. The elderly home that we stayed in is called Hoeverstaete in Alkmaar, Netherlands, with around 186 residents with an average age of 80. Before the stay, we were instructed to keep an open mind, and not to have any conclusions or hypothesis before we are there.

We decided that the most precious thing that we could gain from this experience is to actually get the chance to communicate with the elderly. We decided not to focus too much on the architectural space, but to try and discover the needs by interacting with the people themselves.

In terms of research method that we undertook during the stay, we decided to first start observing and initiate casual conversations to gather generic impressions and information, while also gaining their trust. Secondly, specific topics were put forward based on the observation results in the first two days. Thirdly, informal or formal interviews and questionnaires were included to further identify their personal needs in their living environment. Finally, the method of photo series was used as a tool to reveal a pattern.

Discoveries

Based on the observations- Spacial environment influences social behavior. The social interaction targets shift multiple times, this was related to the spacial environment of the common room.

Based on the questionnaire- Residents in the elderly home attach great importance to the public and private space, but regarding the space in between, the opinion varies greatly.

Based on the photo documentation- I made the hypothesis that the space between the public and private shows the most potential in celebrating the individuality of the elderly.

Research Background

Personalization: Future Trend in Elderly Home Designs

The focus for the residential homes for the aging population has shifted over the years. The sole purpose for elderly home in the 19th century was to contain the elderly who were facing the problems of declining physical conditions (Willocks, Peace, Kellaher, 1986). Institutionalized design with large public areas and multiple-residents room were applied in architectural layout to minimize the burden of supervision for care staff (Barnes S., 2006). Large domestic homes became less dominant in the early 1950s when residential homes became a choice rather than a destitution for the elderly (Bland.R, 1999). In the 1960s and 1970s, the focus on mental health stimulated multiple authorities to introduce notes and standards, recommending smaller homes with self contained unit to improve the living environment of the elderly (Willocks, Peace, Kellaher, 1986; Barnes S., 2006, Bland.R, 1999). In 2001, Department of Health in Britain included requirements for privacy and activity access in elderly

homes in the National Care Standard (Barnes S., 2006). In the past two decades, we have built nursing homes that encourages the elderly to bond with the community and not be excluded from the society.

The trend of design of residential homes is clear: aspects that are higher in the Maslows' pyramid of needs were focused on when the lower part of needs in the pyramid were fulfilled. Traditionally the residence home was only an institutional tool to solve social problems like the dependency or safety issues. The second stage started in 1948, when architects started to respect the needs of the elderly for a feeling of belonging and comfort by avoiding institutional design features (Willocks, Peace, Kellaher, 1986). Ever since the late 20th century, the esteem needs for the elderly were taken into account due to the research on aspects like personalization, privacy, awareness, and community (Barnes S., 2006). Hanson, J (2001) revealed the need for identity and individuality expression in his research on material, decoration and furnishings in care homes.

Individuality expression and self-realization are what the elderly are longing for now after the lower needs on the Maslow's Pyramid are fulfilled to some extent. "The Elderly" is no longer considered one collective group of people that shares the same preference, hobby, and thoughts, but actually a sum of individuals who longs to have traces of themselves even in non-private spaces.

In the excursion where the researcher stayed in an elderly home in Alkmaar, Netherlands, a similar need was discovered. A questionnaire was handed out to ask the residents to rank the importance of a certain factor in their living environment. It showed that "a place to express yourself" was the 5th with the largest number of people ranking it "most important", right after "a comfortable apartment", "a nice common room", "a place for family and friends to visit", and "care and help". Some of the residents were asked in interviews what it made them feel to decorate or furnish their living environment. A popular response was that it made them feel like it was their place. An interviewee who lived in places around the world said: "Where the decorations or collections is, where it is my home."

Research have shown that personalization plays an important part in self-realization and well-being for the elderly. In the research by Brunia, S. and Hartjes-Gosselink, A (2009) on personalization in non-territorial offices, three needs of personalization in workplace were identified: the physiological needs, the social needs and the psychological needs. Another need that was distinguished by the research was the need for expressing emotions. Furthermore, Langer, E.J. and Rodin, J. (1976) stated that having choice and enhanced personal responsibility, especially in an institutional setting, had a positive effect for the well-being of older people.

While the importance of personalization in elderly homes was both recognized by scholars, resident and the care, this need was still neglected in the elderly residence's design. In a research on 5 different elderly homes, Popham, Carolyn and Orrell, Martin (2012) discovered that personalization was a frequently mentioned focus theme in interviews for the residents, family carers, staff and managers. However, when assessing the built environment of the elderly homes by using the Sheffield Care Environmental Assessment Matrix (SCEAM), it was discovered that the domain of personalization ranked 8th out of 9.

It is clear that the architectural design of the homes do not offer enough personalization elements and space to fulfil the contemporary need for the residents to claim their individuality. While each of the elderly have individually different needs, elderly homes provides unified and almost identical space for their residents. Even in spaces that there were tracks of individuality, the expression of it was only achieved without consciousness of the designer, the manager and even the resident itself.

Secondary Territory

In 1975, Altman stated that there are primary, secondary and public territories, distinguishable by the significance to individual or group, the extend of ownership, the amount of personalization and the defense activities in it if offended. Similarly, Porteus (1977) and Brower (1976) also believed that these aspects were crucial in the idea of territory and each identified three territories. Porteus stated three types of territories: personal space, home base and home range and Brower differentiated three types: personal territory, community territory, and free territory. However, other scholars had different opinions on how territories should be classified. Lyman and Scott (1967) classified territories into interaction territory and body territory; Sharkawy (1979) and Lang (1987) spotted four types of territory: the attached, central, supporting, and peripheral. In this paper, Altman's theory of territory is applied for research.

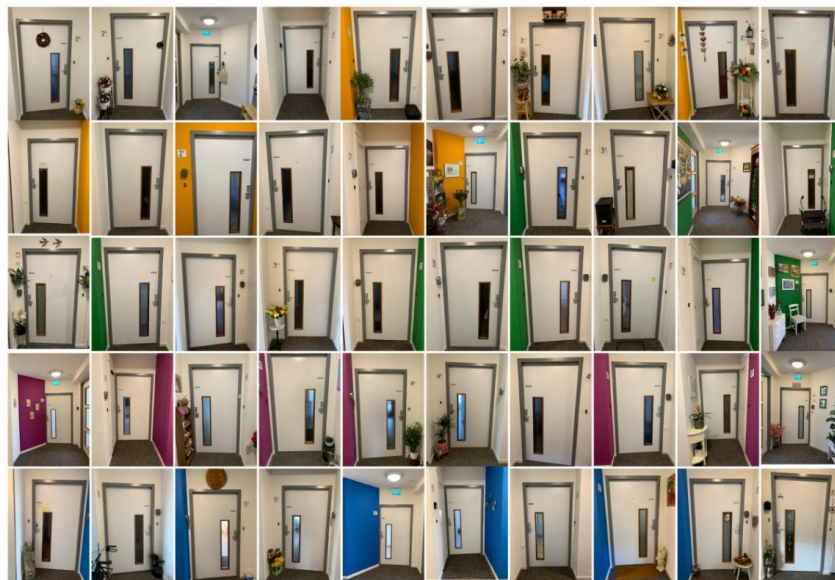
Personalization occurs mostly in primary territories, evident by the fact that out of 21 items that measure the scale of personalization in an elderly home in SCEAM, as much as 10 are measured in the

private room. However, the primary territory, or private space, is a place where the signs of individuality are hidden and unseen by the other residents.

On the other hand, in public territories, there is little tolerance for individuality since it was by definition the space for collective groups of people.

Therefore, when it comes to the need of individuality expression and self-realization of the elderly, it is in the secondary territory that personalization plays the strongest role. In the secondary territory, the subject of activities are individuals who are loosely associated and have not yet formed a collective group, as Zubaidi F(2019) have stated “Secondary territories have ownership cognition that is not owned by one individual, others can enter and see as a credible user, space control is controlled periodically.” All personalized expression are exposed and turned the non-private space more personal. Individuality expression in such space is how the residents are empowered to make it their place instead of a general place for the elderly where they were put in together despite different preference and choices.

This statement could be primitively supported by these 50 photos of “view in front of their doors” in the elderly home that the researcher stayed in during excursion. Beautiful and character-representing decorations outside the doors in the hallway in the elderly revealed the need of personalization in secondary territory.



Abundant research on secondary territory has been conducted by researchers on definitions, characteristics, and effect(Hall, T.E., 1969; Burger.J, 1980; Zubaidi,F, 2019; Altman and Chemers, 1984). The table below integrates these research and shows a comparison of primary, secondary and public territory in different aspects.

	Primary Territory	Secondary Territory	Public Territory
Examples in the Scale of Architecture	Private Room	Hallway	Entrance Hall, Courtyard
Actor	Individual	Small-Group	Big Group
Exclusivity in Use and Accessibility	Exclusive	Not too used exclusively by a person or group of people.	Used and entered by anyone.
Permanency of Ownership	Permanent	Temporary	
Degree of Control that occupants have over use of a place	Dominant Control	Periodic Control	No Control
Size	Small	Mid-Sized	Large
Function	Identity, Personal	Social Regulation System	
Visual Exposure	None	Weak	Strong

Level of Overlapping of Recognition	None	Weak	Strong
Personal Involvement	Strong	Weak	Weak
Defence Tendency to Neighbors	Strong	Weak	None
Defence Tendency to Non-Neighbors	Strong	Strong	Weak
Closeness of Daily Life of Individuals or Groups	Strong	Weak	Weak
Frequency of Use	Strong	Weak	Weak

To further explain, secondary territories has the following characters: significant to both individual or group; only accessible to part of the people; the people using is can only claim small part of ownership; there are signs of personalization but not as much in the primary territory; the amount of individuality expression significantly more than that in public spaces, less than that in private spaces; defence actions or emotion are shown when it is violated and when other neighbors do not react to it.

Secondary territory have different meanings in different scales. Based on the characteristics of secondary territory, some examples of secondary territory space are discovered and pointed out on four different scales: city, neighborhood, street, building, as shown in the table below.

	Public Territory Space	Secondary Territory Space	Primary Territory Space
City	City Park, Squares	Neighborhood Parks	Residential Blocks
Neighborhood	Neighborhood parks	Inner Courtyards, Streets	Building groups
Street	Side walks	Alleyway between the front yards	Architecture
Architecture	Common Rooms	Hallways, Shared Terrace, Kitchen for the floor	Rooms

Research Gap

On the one hand, although abundant research have been carried out on the definition, characteristics and role of secondary territories space in elderly homes(Archea, J, 2016; Altman, 1975), few have systematically identified typical examples of secondary territories and their individual characteristics. Moreover, the influence of secondary territory space in the aspect of personalization is neglected and needs further research.

On the other hand, while some of the researchers have investigated on the influence of design in physical environment in terms of personalization, most of the focus were that on public space and private space(Willocks, Peace, Kellaher, 1987; Costa, M., 2012; Kinney, J.M., Stephens, M.A.P., & Brockmann, A.M., 1987; Brunia, S., Hartjes-Gosselink, A., 2009).

Therefore, a research gap of personalization in secondary territory space is identified.

Research Content

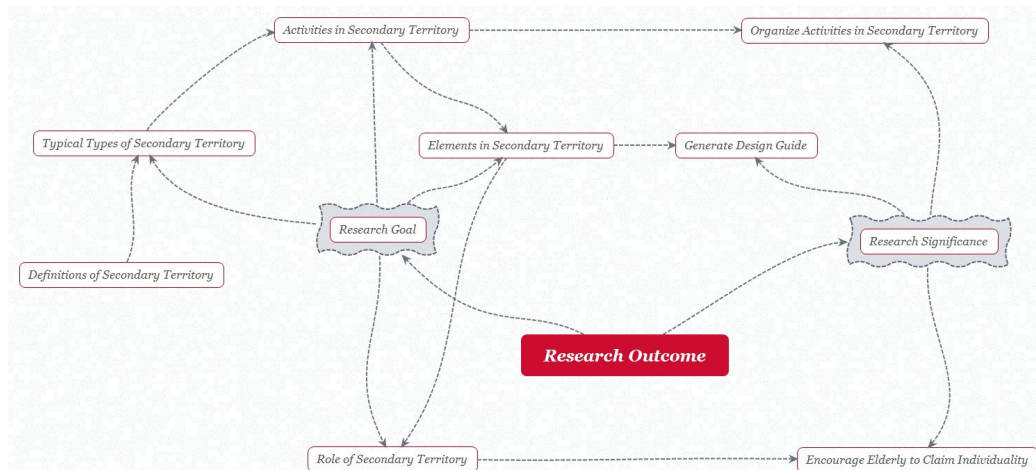
Research Question

The main research question of this paper is: How can space in secondary territory enhance or restrict the personalization for residents in elderly home residence?

Sub-questions include:

1. What are typical examples of secondary territory space in elderly residence in the scale of architecture? Which kinds of secondary territory encourage personalization the most?
2. How do the residents use the secondary territory space in a highly personalized elderly residence? What do they conceive of the secondary territory space?
3. What elements are the most important in the secondary territory for the residents to claim their individuality?

Research Goal and Significance

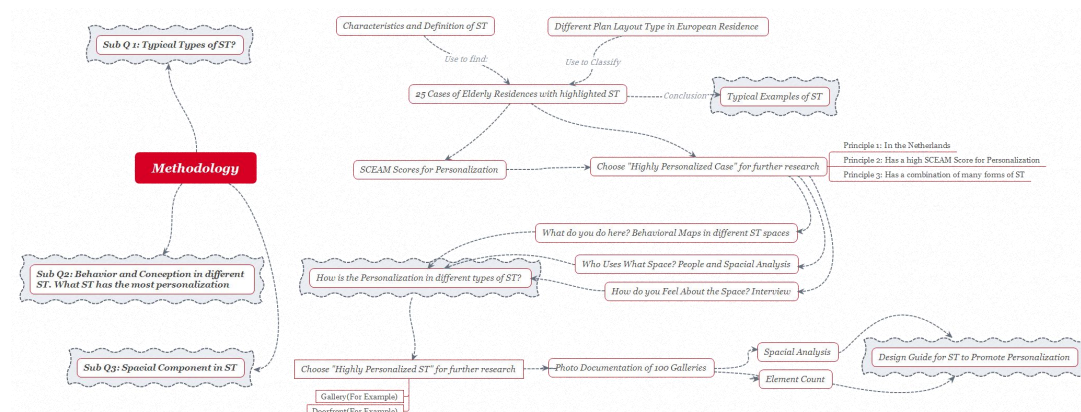


The research goal is to extract typical types of secondary territory space based on the definition and characteristics of secondary territory space, and deconstruct the compositions of it in both behavioral terms and spacial terms. Eventually, the role or influence of the secondary territory on empowering the elderly to claim their individuality will be discovered.

The research significance of this research is twofold. Firstly, with this research on secondary territory space, awareness of the role of it will be raised. The elderly would be more encouraged to express their personality and claim their individuality, which was proven to be beneficial in terms of physiological needs, the social needs and the psychological needs. The organization will be more aware to treat the group as a sum of individuals instead of a collective group. The designers would be more conscious in creating spaces with more possibilities to adapt to the different needs of each individual.

Secondly, the research would be helpful in generating a design guide for secondary territory spaces in elderly homes, a space that celebrates each elderly person as an individual. Possible directions include customized space, movable space, or space to contain decorative elements.

Methodology



This research will be mainly carried out with qualitative research methods, and different methods will be applied in the attempt of answering each sub-questions. The image above shows the methodology and expected results from research.

For the first part of the research to identify typical types of secondary territories, 25 cases of elderly residence from all over the world will be chosen and classified based on plan layout type. This is because plan layout is the most dominant factor in creating different types of secondary territories. The secondary territory in all of the 25 cases will be identified based on a table of definition and characteristics of it, and then highlighted in plan. Furthermore, the level of personalization of each

case will be rated through the SCEAM system, which will be one of the main principles for case selection in the next stage of research.

In the second part of the research to identify behaviors and conception of the secondary territory of the users, case study is the main method. The most “personalized” cases are selected and investigated in depth as stated above. For the behavioral study part, a behavioral mapping is drawn to reveal what people do and which people uses what space. Data are collected through observation. Another part of the research in this part is conception, where interviews on site are conducted. Interviewees will be asked on how they makes sense of their own circumstances, decorations, behaviors, activities and emotions in the secondary territory. To conclude this part of research, different types of secondary territories will be ranked weak, general or strong in encouraging personalization based on the behavior, actor and conception.

For the third part of the research to reveal the most important elements in secondary territories, two of the most typical types of secondary territory (the gallery and the door front space) are further investigated in terms of spatial composition and meanings. This part of the research is carried out by photo documentation, which further helps with spacial analysis and element counts. This would eventually help generate a design guide for secondary territories and/or elderly residence that encourages personalization and fulfil the celebration of individuality of the elderly.

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