7.3 INSTITUTIONAL DISTINCTIVENESS

The Karpagam Academy of Higher Education established Faculty of Architecture in 2009. Since then, the Faculty of Architecture has undertaken some of the innovative projects such as internationally known capacity building research initiative called Building Inclusive Urban Communities (BInUCom), creating city profiles and conducting individual research including household surveys. One of the distinctive projects of the Faculty of Architecture is ‘Conservation Architecture’.

There are about 39000 temples in Tamil Nadu and as many as 7327 temples have been consecrated and renovated so far. Over 1000 temples are in dilapidated condition and need to be renovated and protected. The allocation by the HR & CE towards renovation has dropped drastically from Rs. 416 crores in 2015-16 to Rs. 70 crores (excluding Palani) in 2017-18.

With the sole aim of protecting these temples, “Save Culture and Heritage Foundation” was instituted by the Karpagam Academy of Higher Education to preserve and safeguard the cultural, intellectual and spiritual heritage of our great monuments. As on date 511 (Five hundred and Eleven) temples were consecrated by the institution promoters and regular poojas are performed.

Under this program, the conservation work is carried out in three main broad categories:

1. Tamil Hymn and Poetry
2. Structural Conservation (Architects)
3. Structural Conservation (Civil Engineering)

**Structural Conservation:**

The workers in the field are acquiring cumulative knowledge of several generations and gaining expertise on the ways to improve and stabilize the structures by maintaining their pristine looks. The structures are given additional strength and reinforced to undo the harms done by pollution, acid rains, and other chemicals over the years. The foundations are so improved so as the make these structures natural-disasters resistant.

**Preliminary Investigation:**

In Physical Inspection it was observed that discoloration and staining has taken place due to soil erosion. Vertical cracks are observed due to overloading by vegetation growth and at some surfaces diagonal cracks due to variable climatic conditions and aging.

After identifying dilapidated old granite structures of the temple, the Civil department concentrates on strengthening foundation and general civil works. Architecture department concentrates on maintenance of architectural domain. The literature part is taken care of by the Tamil department.
One portion of the temple used to be renovated by Karpagam Academy of Higher Education. This exercise has greatly helped the students of the Department of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Tamil to understand the nuances behind such a mammoth structural and architectural design of temples. Further, they could also understand, appreciate the intricate applications of principles of engineering in ancient temple constructions.

This distinctive area of renovating the temple architecture by the Karpagam Academy of Higher Education through its Departments of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Tamil goes with its vision of instilling originality in the learning minds of young students and to make them understand the rich value of Indian traditional culture and also to engage them in Research relating to Temple construction, design and conservation which is one of the thrust areas of Research and Development of the Institution.