

## **My dear students,**

Trust all is well at your end, Hope every one of you is safe by staying at Home. It is time for us to express our solidarity to the fellow human beings who are infected with corona virus, to their families and society at large. Let our students of SPMVV stand together as Change agents during this COVID crisis. May I seek your attention to read through the message of our Hon'ble Vice chancellor? We will be happy if you can get back to us with your activities which will be placed in our SPMVV website. Stay safe.

**Prof .D.M. Mamatha,  
Registrar**

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## ***Message from our Hon'ble Vice Chancellor:***

### **SPMVV Students as 'Change Agents' at this crisis of COVID-19**

Education is not only about acquiring knowledge, it is also about applying that knowledge to bring in a meaningful change in the society through dedicated efforts. At a time when the whole world is facing the challenge of a pandemic like Corona Virus COVID-19, with uncertainties that the situation beholds, the onus of mitigating the damage is on the students who are the 'future' of the society.

India having the second highest population among all the countries of the world and with high levels of population density, the spread of the virus can cause unimaginable damage if neglected. Though there is no field that is not impacted by the pandemic, the socio-psychological implications are the most noticeable. It is in this scenario that the role of student as a change agent becomes crucial.

As all of us are aware, Educational institutions were evacuated at a short notice. A pause button has been pressed on the vibrant campus life, the fun and the frolic of students. The sudden transition in the social life style is a discomfort that everybody is experiencing. We miss associations, the community and social exchanges. But with the awareness that we do not have enough healthcare resources and diagnostic facilities to counter the Corona virus, let us perceive the social isolation and the social distancing positively, all in the welfare of ourselves and our loved ones.

While social isolation and quarantine pertain to people infected and were exposed to an infection respectively, social distancing is a wonderful tactic to keep people from congregating in large crowds to slow the spread of a virus. But the socio-psychological perceptions and the resultant behavior patterns of vast sections of population are becoming impediments to all the efforts of the policy makers in controlling the spread of the Corona Virus.

The student community, with the knowledge they gained through education, can become the change agents who can create awareness among members of their family, neighbors in the

community and to the society at large about the symptoms(as per ICMR, WHO), safety measures and personal responsibility in curtailing the spread of Corona virus attack through social distance. Students' proactive role as Brand ambassadors of their Institutions can create great impact in spreading the message about the need to comply with the norms of social distancing that being the only way out of this crisis. With persuasion I am sure the students can impress upon people, the clear understanding that social distancing is not distancing from our loved ones, neither psychological isolation nor deprivation of visual and auditory cues, but is only a temporary restriction on the social movement for the cause of reducing the intensity of the pandemic.

Acknowledging the services and the sacrifices of the Frontline Helpers who are in the forefront, the students themselves can be exemplary by being careful and responsible in this hour of need.

It is time to stimulate our pro-social and altruistic tendencies in us for volunteering ourselves to serve the needy either as change agents through virtual platforms or as onsite helpers. Students can form groups using technology in their mission of developing awareness among the public, systematically and at a faster pace. Network of students' chain should be made to exchange ideas while debunking the myths and misnomers ailing the society. But at the same time they should refrain from spreading messages which can cause unnecessary panic condition and can bring behavior change about the need to view whatsapp and other social media propaganda with discretion.

Anxiety and phobia are the psychological challenges that the pandemic threw at the society. On a positive note it may be necessary to have mild doses of anxiety that can push us towards finding solution, but excessive anxiety will make us fear irrationally and cause phobias which is an absolutely avoidable stage. Overcoming these fears need collective effort and commitment to an acceptable alternative way of life during crisis in terms of socializing, food habits, sleep patterns, exercise routines and adherence to norms, and this is where students can set examples to the society.

The psychological implications around the present pandemic can be addressed by developing a positive attitude towards social distancing as an excellent opportunity to be with the family, and to be able to get time for doing all that one has been longing to do in busy lives.

Let's begin this 'Chain of Change' with our students of SPMVV as change agents to help people around them. It is also time to look for alternative avenues to keep themselves busy - reading, writing, exercising, playing, and involving in mindfulness practices to ensure good mental health and psychological well being for their loved ones, children and parents. Let us work together for a healthy society and contribute our mite as potential change agents.

**PROF. JAMUNA DUVVURU**  
Vice- Chancellor, SPMVV