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The Dental Student

By

Douglas M. More, Ph.D.

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Preface

Several years ago the Committee on Recruitment of the American College of Dentists, after considerable study, came to the conclusion that any effort that had for its objective the interesting of young men and women in a career in dentistry would be aided greatly if more information were available on what motivated a person to consider such a professional career.

The few limited studies on motivation that had been made up to that time offered valuable suggestions and gave encouragement to the desirability of broader efforts in this field.

In the Spring of 1958, the then Chairman of the Committee on Recruitment—Dr. J. Wallace Forbes of Philadelphia—and the Secretary of the College, consulted with Dr. Nathan Kohn, Jr., of NK and Associates, Inc., of St. Louis. Dr. Kohn previously had indicated an interest in the recruitment problem in a discussion with a committee of the St. Louis Section of the College relative to recruitment in Missouri.

The result of the conference with Dr. Kohn was to recommend to the Board of Regents that such a study be undertaken for the College by Dr. Kohn and his associates.

In the early weeks of the opening of the 1958-1959 school year, with the cooperation of the deans and faculties of the dental schools, questionnaires were sent to the Freshman students to find out why they had chosen dentistry as a career. This effort was unusually successful in that returns were received from more than 99 per cent of all the students entering the dental schools in the Fall of 1958.

Subsequent discussion with deans, teachers, students (including upper classmen) made available a mass of information that should prove to be most valuable in determining what factors play important roles in the motivation of students for a dental career.

In the material that follows Dr. Kohn and his associate Dr. More have analysed the various factors presented, and have offered suggestions that should help the dental profession in any recruitment efforts having for their objective the securing of a fair share of the qualified young men and women for a career in dentistry.

Douglas M. More and Nathan Kohn, Jr. are members of the St. Louis firm of NK and Associates, Inc. They are psychologists and