

## PHCOG MAG.: Letters to the editor

***CAN THE TERM ORGANOLEPTIC BE  
CONSIDERED EQUIVALENT TO  
ZOOLOGICAL?***

Pharmacognosy is an interdisciplinary subject concerned with organoleptic, botanical, physical, chemical and biological (pharmacological) characters of crude drugs. Of the above-mentioned five parameters, except organoleptic, the remaining four parameters represent the four different branches of

Science such as botany, physics, chemistry and pharmacology respectively.

The term organoleptic literally means impression on sense organs viz. eyes, nose, tongue, ears and touch. The organoleptic study is a qualitative method where worker applies sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing to record the characteristic features of crude drugs. In this study, size, shape including external and internal colours and markings, fractures, texture, odour and taste are noted down. The methodology of this study is generally known as Organoleptic and the data so obtained from this study is referred to as Sensory characters.

Since Organoleptic study is totally based on the sense organs of human beings, who are an important member of animal kingdom, the term Zoological seems to be more appropriate for this study than the term Organoleptic in a broader sense. Further, the term Organoleptic is less familiar as compared to Zoological.

In the light of the above mentioned facts, it is suggested that the term 'Organoleptic' may be renamed as 'Zoological' followed by sensory characters within brackets for the better understanding, i.e. Zoological (Sensory characters). In addition, the proposed term is expected to bring uniformity among the other

pharmacognostic parameters by representing one of the branches of Science (Zoology) on one hand and familiarity on the other.

It is further suggested that before renaming the term 'Organoleptic' as 'Zoological', it could be discussed among the pharmacognosists to arrive at a suitable conclusion in this regard. Once, the renaming is accepted, it may be written as Zoological (Sensory characters) as is adopted in the case of pharmacological studies, which is often written as Biological (pharmacological).

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