

Opinion

Pharmacognosy

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Introduction

Pharmacognosy is a word derived from the Greek words “pharmakon” (drug) and “gnosis” (knowledge), The term Pharmacognosy was first introduced by the Austrian physician Schmidt in 1811 and then in 1815 by Seydler in a work titled *Analecta Pharmacognostica*. Pharmacognostica is probably the most oldest modern science, and the study of crude drugs of plant and animal origin (in the form of tinctures, teas, poultices, powders, and other herbal formulations), and it incorporates authentication and quality control of such drugs, based on macroscopic and microscopic examinations of crude drugs [1].

Like any other scientific area, since the introduction of Pharmacognosy some 200 years ago, it has evolved over the years, and now Pharmacognosy can be defined as the science of biogenic or naturally derived drugs [1], Now-a-days there is a renewed interest in drugs of natural origin simply because they are considered as green medicine and green medicine is always supposed to be safe. Another factor which emphasizes this attention is the incidences of harmful nature of synthetic drugs which are regarded as harmful to human beings and environment. The advantage of natural drugs is their easy availability, economic and less or no side effects but the disadvantage is that they are the victims of adul-

teration. The more effective the natural drug more is its demand and the chances of non-availability increases. To meet the growing demand, the natural drug is easily adulterated with low grade material [2].

phytochemistry and phytochemical analysis have become integral parts of Pharmacognosy. The important Research elements in Pharmacognosy are into ethnobotany, ethnomedicine, and ethnopharmacology [1].

Pharmacognosy has played a pivotal role in the discovery and development of new drugs and therapies, and has been continuing to do so even today [1].

References

1. Satyajit D. Sarker (2012) Pharmacognosy in modern pharmacy curricula, *Pharmacognosy Magazine* 8: 91-92.
2. Sumitra Chanda (2014) Importance of pharmacognostic study of medicinal plants: An overview, *Journal of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry* 2: 69-73.