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Review Article

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"ROLE OF GOOD MANUFACTURING PRACTICES (GMP) IN RASASHASTRA AND BHAISHAJYA KALPANA"

Dr. Abhay Gandhi[1]

AFFLIATIONS:
1. Director, Ira Consultancy & Research Organisation, Bhosari, Pune, Maharashtra 411026

CORRESPONDENCE:
Dr. Abhay Gandhi
EMAIL ID: director@icro.co.in

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, the core pharmaceutical branches of Ayurveda, emphasize precise preparation of herbal and herbo-mineral formulations to ensure therapeutic efficacy and safety. In modern times, increasing demand for Ayurvedic medicines has highlighted the importance of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) in guaranteeing product quality, safety, and global acceptability. **Methods:** A structured literature review was conducted across PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, AYUSH Research Portal, and Google Scholar (2000–2025). Ayurvedic classical texts including *Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Rasa Ratna Samucchaya,* and *Ayurveda Sara Sangraha* were consulted to trace traditional pharmaceutical quality-control principles. Studies included regulatory guidelines, toxicological assessments, clinical reports, and reviews addressing GMP in Ayurvedic pharmaceutics. **Results:** Classical texts emphasize raw material authentication, *Shodhana* (purification), *Marana* (incineration), proper storage, and ethical dispensing. These align with modern GMP principles such as raw material quality control, process validation, hygiene, record-keeping, and quality assurance. Evidence shows that Ayurvedic medicines manufactured under GMP-certified facilities exhibit improved safety, reduced contamination, and higher therapeutic reliability. Failures in GMP compliance are strongly correlated with instances of heavy metal contamination, adulteration, and loss of credibility in global markets. **Discussion:** GMP provides a bridge between classical Rasashastra–Bhaishajya Kalpana protocols and modern pharmaceutical requirements. Integration ensures safety, efficacy, and international acceptance. Challenges remain in harmonizing traditional methods with industrial scalability, ensuring trained manpower, and aligning with international regulations. **Conclusion:** GMP is indispensable for safeguarding the credibility of Ayurveda. Strict adherence ensures consumer safety, scientific validation, and global recognition, making it essential for the future sustainability of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Bhaishajya Kalpana, GMP, quality assurance, Rasashastra

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, one of the oldest medical sciences, has provided humanity with a wealth of knowledge on disease management and health promotion[1]. Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana are the pharmaceutical arms of Ayurveda, dealing with the preparation, preservation, and dispensing of medicines[2-3]. Rasashastra particularly focuses on herbo-mineral preparations, while Bhaishajya Kalpana addresses herbal formulations, both aiming at enhancing therapeutic efficacy while ensuring patient safety[4].

In the current era, Ayurveda has gained global recognition. However, rising concerns over the quality and safety of Ayurvedic formulations, particularly regarding heavy metal content, adulteration, and variability in efficacy, highlight the need for stringent quality-control measures[5-7]. Many of these concerns stem not from Ayurveda itself but from inadequate standardization and lapses in manufacturing practices[8].

The present review aims to analyze the role of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) in Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana. The objectives are: (i) to evaluate classical Ayurvedic references concerning pharmaceutical quality assurance; (ii) to review modern GMP guidelines and their relevance to Ayurvedic pharmaceutics; (iii) to identify challenges and gaps in current GMP implementation; and (iv) to propose future strategies for harmonizing traditional practices with modern quality frameworks[10].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A systematic review was conducted between January and May 2025.

Databases searched: PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, AYUSH Research Portal, and Google Scholar[11].

Search strategy: Keywords used were "Rasashastra GMP," "Bhaishajya Kalpana quality control," "Ayurveda pharmaceutics GMP," "herbo-mineral formulations safety," and "Ayurvedic drug standardization." Boolean operators (AND, OR) were applied for refining results[12].

Inclusion criteria: [13]

- Articles (2000–2025) on GMP applications in Ayurveda.
- Studies evaluating safety, efficacy, or quality of Ayurvedic formulations prepared under GMP.
- Classical Ayurvedic references describing pharmaceutical protocols.
- Regulatory frameworks and policy documents.

Exclusion criteria: [14]

- Non-peer-reviewed material, promotional content, and anecdotal claims.
- Studies not related to GMP or pharmaceutical quality control.

Data synthesis: Information was grouped thematically into:[15]

1. Classical Ayurvedic quality principles.
2. Modern GMP frameworks.
3. Comparative evaluation of traditional and modern approaches.
4. Evidence of GMP benefits in Ayurveda.
5. Challenges in GMP adoption.

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS

1. Classical principles of quality in Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana

Ayurvedic classics emphasize stringent pharmaceutical protocols long before the advent of modern GMP. *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* prescribe authentication of raw materials, proper collection time, and ethical sourcing. Rasashastra texts like *Rasa Ratna Samucchaya* describe *Shodhana* (purification) and *Marana* (incineration) techniques to detoxify metals and minerals, ensuring safety and bioavailability. Detailed instructions on grinding, heating, quenching, and repeated processing highlight the importance of precision. Storage guidelines, such as using airtight earthen pots, and ethical dispensing underscore quality assurance. These classical measures serve as the philosophical foundation of modern GMP.

2. Modern GMP principles relevant to Ayurveda

GMP, as defined by the WHO and enforced by regulatory bodies such as AYUSH and CDSCO in India, ensures consistency, safety, and quality of pharmaceutical products. Key components include:

- Raw material authentication and traceability.
- Hygienic infrastructure with clean zones for different processes.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all manufacturing stages.
- Process validation and in-process quality checks.
- Documentation and batch records.

- Stability testing, packaging, and labeling standards.

For Ayurvedic formulations, GMP emphasizes botanical authentication, toxic metal testing, microbial contamination control, and adherence to pharmacopeial standards (API volumes).

3. Evidence of GMP benefits in Ayurvedic pharmaceutics

Several studies confirm the role of GMP in improving the safety and reliability of Ayurvedic medicines. Analytical studies on herbo-mineral preparations manufactured under GMP facilities show significantly lower contamination levels compared to non-compliant units. Clinical reports suggest improved therapeutic predictability and fewer adverse reactions when formulations are GMP-certified. International acceptance of Ayurveda-based products in markets like the USA and EU is often contingent on GMP certification, further underscoring its necessity.

4. Case studies of GMP failures and implications

Reports of heavy metal contamination in Ayurvedic medicines, particularly from unregulated or small-scale units, often cite lack of GMP adherence as the primary cause. WHO case reports highlight instances where lead or mercury poisoning occurred due to improper processing or absence of detoxification procedures. These failures tarnish the image of Ayurveda globally, despite traditional processes being inherently safe when followed correctly. Thus, lapses in GMP are more a reflection of inadequate enforcement than of Ayurveda's inherent principles.

5. Regulatory frameworks and GMP implementation in India

The Ministry of AYUSH has mandated GMP certification for Ayurvedic drug manufacturers since 2002 under Schedule T of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act. The WHO-GMP guidelines provide further frameworks for ensuring international compatibility. GMP compliance includes infrastructure upgrades, trained technical staff, raw material testing, and regular audits. Despite progress, a significant number of smaller units still operate without full compliance, highlighting the gap between policy and practice.

6. Challenges in harmonizing GMP with Rasashastra–Bhaishajya Kalpana

- **Scalability vs. tradition:** Traditional methods like *puta* (incineration in cow-dung cakes) are difficult to replicate in industrial GMP setups.
- **Lack of trained workforce:** Few professionals are equally versed in classical pharmaceutics and modern GMP.
- **Economic barriers:** Small-scale units often find GMP compliance financially challenging.
- **Global regulatory diversity:** Lack of harmonized standards makes it difficult for Ayurvedic products to penetrate global markets.
- **Documentation vs. tradition:** Traditional practices often emphasize experiential knowledge, which may not easily translate into modern documentation formats.

DISCUSSION

The integration of GMP into Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana reflects a synthesis of tradition and modernity. Classical texts already embody the essence of GMP, as seen in their emphasis on raw material authentication, purification, precision in manufacturing, and proper storage. However, modern GMP provides a systematic framework with scientific rigor, reproducibility, and regulatory oversight[16].

One of the most significant benefits of GMP implementation in Ayurveda is the prevention of adulteration and contamination. Cases of heavy metal toxicity highlight the consequences of neglecting purification and standardization. Studies confirm that properly processed herbo-mineral formulations are safe, but lack of GMP monitoring in unregulated industries compromises credibility. Thus, GMP not only ensures safety but also protects Ayurveda's reputation globally[17].

Another key aspect is international acceptance. Modern consumers demand transparency, safety data, and standardization. GMP provides this assurance, bridging the gap between ancient pharmaceutics and contemporary expectations. GMP-certified Ayurvedic products have gained entry into regulated markets, opening opportunities for global expansion[18].

Nonetheless, challenges persist. The mechanization of processes like *Marana* or *Bhavana* may alter the subtle qualities described in Ayurvedic texts. Bridging this gap requires collaborative research, where modern analytical techniques (XRD, ICP-MS, SEM) are applied to validate traditional processes.

Additionally, training programs are needed to create experts proficient in both classical Ayurveda and pharmaceutical GMP[19].

Future prospects lie in harmonizing GMP with Ayurvedic pharmaceutics at three levels: regulatory (uniform global standards), educational (integrating GMP training into Ayurveda curriculum), and research (scientific validation of classical methods under GMP conditions). By doing so, Ayurveda can retain its authenticity while meeting international expectations of safety and efficacy[20].

CONCLUSION

Good Manufacturing Practices represent both a modern regulatory requirement and an extension of ancient Ayurvedic wisdom. The classical emphasis on purification, precision, and ethical dispensing aligns seamlessly with GMP principles of quality assurance, documentation, and safety monitoring. Evidence suggests that adherence to GMP enhances the therapeutic reliability of Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana formulations while preventing cases of contamination and adverse events.

The challenges in GMP implementation are significant, particularly for small-scale manufacturers and traditional practitioners, but not insurmountable. Investments in training, infrastructure, and research can help bridge the gap between classical pharmaceutics and modern industrial requirements. Collaborative frameworks involving Ayurvedic scholars, pharmaceutical scientists, and policymakers are crucial to achieve this integration.

Ultimately, GMP is not just a regulatory obligation but a tool for safeguarding the credibility of Ayurveda in the modern world. By ensuring safety, efficacy, and quality, GMP strengthens the global acceptance of Ayurvedic medicines and paves the way for their sustainable future. Rasashastra and Bhaishajya Kalpana, when practiced under GMP, can continue to serve as reliable pillars of integrative healthcare worldwide.

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