DOI:10.59787/2413-5488-2026-55-3-39-48

Aida Sagintayeva*, Gulmira Qanay
Nazarbayev University

BEYOND REGULATION: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND DOCTORAL EDUCATION IN KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract. Doctoral education has expanded across many higher education systems as governments seek to strengthen national research capacity, innovation, and international competitiveness. Yet growth in doctoral enrolment does not necessarily translate into stronger doctoral outcomes. This study examines recent developments in doctoral education in Kazakhstan through an institutional capacity perspective. Drawing on official statistics for 2021–2024 and international scholarship, it analyses trends in doctoral admissions, graduation, and completion with dissertation defence. Institutional capacity is not measured directly; rather, it is used as an interpretive framework centred on five organisational domains: supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity. The findings point not to a simple deterioration in doctoral outcomes, but to an uneven pattern of system development. Admissions remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2023 before increasing sharply in 2024, while graduation and dissertation defence followed different trajectories. These trends do not establish causal relationships but raise questions about whether organisational capacity develops alongside system expansion. The article distinguishes between expansion of PhD provision and the institutional development required to sustain it, arguing that regulatory reform and enrolment growth should be accompanied by greater attention to universities' capacity to support high-quality PhD provision.

Keywords: PhD education; institutional capacity; doctoral outcomes; supervision; research environment; higher education policy; Kazakhstan

Introduction

Doctoral education has become a strategic priority for higher education systems seeking to strengthen research capacity, innovation, and international competitiveness. Expansion, however, does not necessarily produce stronger doctoral outcomes. Universities operating within the same national regulatory framework may differ in progression, completion, research productivity, and doctoral experience, suggesting that national policy alone cannot fully explain how doctoral programmes perform. Governments establish regulatory and funding frameworks, while universities create the organisational conditions within which doctoral research is undertaken (McAlpine & Norton, 2006; Skopek et al., 2022; Taylor, 2023).

International scholarship increasingly conceptualises doctoral education as an institutional process rather than solely an individual learning experience or supervisory relationship. From this perspective, doctoral development is shaped by supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity, as well as formal programme requirements (Lee, 2008; Halse & Malfroy, 2010; EUA Council for Doctoral Education, 2016).

Kazakhstan provides a useful context in which to examine these issues. Following its adoption of the Bologna three-cycle degree structure, the country introduced substantial reforms intended to modernise PhD training, strengthen research capacity, and increase international integration (Ibraev et al., 2015; Kuzhabekova, 2020). Recent national statistics reveal an increasingly complex pattern of system development. Admissions remained broadly stable between 2021 and 2023 before rising sharply in 2024, while graduation and dissertation defence followed different trajectories (National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2025). These contrasting trends raise questions about how system-level expansion relates to the organisational conditions through which universities support PhD provision.

Existing research on PhD education in Kazakhstan has examined individual aspects of this transformation, including publication requirements, supervision, internationalisation, and research integrity, but less attention has been paid to how these organisational dimensions collectively relate to system-level change.

This article addresses that gap through an institutional capacity perspective. Institutional capacity is understood as universities' ability to create, coordinate, and sustain the organisational conditions required to support doctoral research and progression. It is not treated as a directly measured variable. Rather, it provides a framework for interpreting national trends through five interrelated domains: supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity.

The study makes three contributions. First, it integrates these organisational dimensions within a single institutional framework. Second, it demonstrates how national doctoral statistics can be interpreted through contemporary scholarship without treating aggregate trends as evidence of causal institutional effects. Third, it distinguishes system expansion from the institutional development required to sustain that expansion.

The study addresses the following questions:

How did doctoral admissions, doctoral completion within the normative period, and graduation with dissertation defence change in Kazakhstan between 2021 and 2024?

How can these trends be interpreted through an institutional capacity perspective?

What implications does this interpretation have for doctoral education policy in Kazakhstan and other rapidly expanding systems?

Literature Review

Doctoral education beyond regulation

Research on doctoral education has increasingly shifted from an emphasis on individual candidates and supervisory relationships towards the broader organisational environments in which doctoral research occurs (Lee, 2008; Halse & Malfroy, 2010; Taylor, 2023). The Salzburg Principles similarly position doctoral education as part of universities' research mission and emphasise strong research environments, critical mass, transparent supervision, and institutional responsibility (EUA Council for Doctoral Education, 2016).

This institutional turn is particularly relevant in systems governed by common national regulations. Formal requirements may be similar across universities, yet institutions differ in research intensity, supervisory capacity, academic culture, organisational support, and infrastructure. Evidence on doctoral completion also suggests that programme organisation and institutional factors matter for progression and time to completion (Skopek et al., 2022). National policy therefore establishes the formal framework for doctoral provision, but universities mediate how that framework operates in practice.

The distinction is also visible in other rapidly reforming post-Soviet systems. Ruziev et al. (2026), for example, show how doctoral reforms in Uzbekistan interact with institutional capacity constraints, incentives, and organisational practices. Such evidence reinforces the need to examine not only what regulations require, but also whether institutions possess the capacity to implement and sustain those requirements.

Organisational conditions supporting doctoral education

Supervision remains central to doctoral education, but it is increasingly understood as institutional and professional work rather than solely an interpersonal relationship. Universities shape supervisory practice through workload allocation, supervisor preparation, mentoring, co-supervision, monitoring, and quality assurance (Halse & Malfroy, 2010; McAlpine, 2013). Recent international research also emphasises the multiple academic, developmental, organisational, and relational functions of doctoral supervisors (Guarimata-Salinas et al., 2024).

Doctoral development also depends on the wider research environment. Research groups, seminars, conferences, collaborative projects, and scholarly networks provide opportunities for intellectual exchange and academic integration (McAlpine & Norton, 2006). Support from supervisors and research communities has been associated with doctoral candidates' research engagement (Rönkkönen et al., 2024). The Salzburg framework captures this through the concept of critical mass: sufficient concentrations of expertise, interaction, and resources to sustain doctoral research (EUA Council for Doctoral Education, 2016).

Governance and progress monitoring constitute a further organisational dimension. Doctoral programmes require coordination among supervisors, departments, doctoral committees, graduate schools, and institutional leadership. Annual reviews, milestone assessments, and early intervention mechanisms can shift responsibility for progression from an exclusively supervisor–candidate relationship towards a broader institutional process (McAlpine, 2013; Skopek et al., 2022).

Research integrity is similarly an institutional as well as individual responsibility. Universities influence

responsible research through ethics education, publication support, research governance, assessment procedures, and academic cultures. Research-integrity education for doctoral researchers is increasingly recognised as an institutional responsibility (Abdi et al., 2021). This is especially relevant where publication requirements strongly shape doctoral progression and academic incentives.

Together, these dimensions suggest that doctoral education operates through interconnected organisational conditions. Their interaction provides the basis for the institutional capacity perspective developed in this article.

Institutional capacity and doctoral education

Institutional capacity is defined here as a university's organisational ability to create, coordinate, and sustain the conditions necessary for effective doctoral training and research. It refers not simply to formal structures but to the capacity to translate national policy and programme requirements into functioning systems of academic support (McAlpine & Norton, 2006; McAlpine, 2013; Taylor, 2023).

This distinction matters because regulatory reform and institutional development may proceed at different speeds. Governments can expand doctoral places or revise degree and publication requirements relatively quickly, whereas developing experienced supervisory communities, strong research cultures, effective governance, and reliable support systems is cumulative and may require considerably more time (Skopek et al., 2022; Ruziev et al., 2026).

The five dimensions used in this study are supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity. They represent domains through which institutional capacity becomes relevant to doctoral provision. These dimensions are not measured directly. Instead, they provide a theoretically informed framework for interpreting national trends and identifying questions that aggregate statistics cannot answer.

Doctoral education in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has undertaken substantial reform of doctoral education following adoption of the Bologna Process. Reforms consolidated the three-cycle degree structure, strengthened quality assurance, revised publication requirements, and expanded international engagement (Ibraev et al., 2015; Kuzhabekova, 2020).

Recent scholarship demonstrates that these reforms interact with institutional conditions. Kuzhabekova (2025) and Bayanbayeva (2026) examine the consequences of publication requirements for research productivity and academic practice. Tokatligil et al. (2025) show that international co-supervision depends on effective institutional support and coordination. Satpayeva et al. (2025) identify continuing challenges in doctoral training in the social sciences and humanities, while Shamatov et al. (2026) examine research integrity under publication requirements.

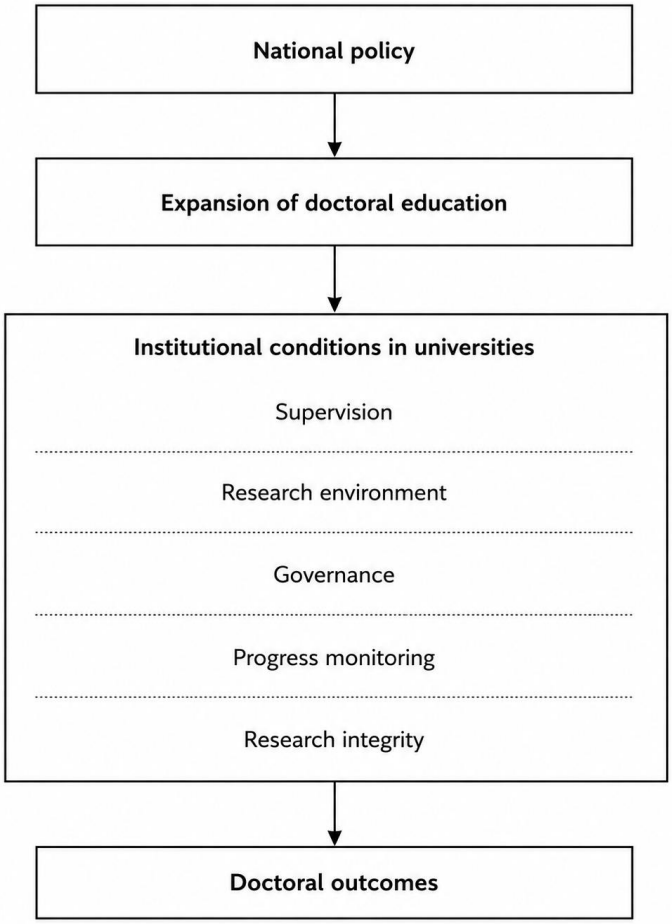
These studies have advanced understanding of particular dimensions of doctoral education, but they have generally examined them separately. The present study brings these organisational dimensions together within an institutional capacity framework and uses that framework to interpret national trends during a period of rapid expansion.

Conceptual Framework

The study is guided by the premise that national regulation alone cannot fully explain the development of doctoral education. Government policy establishes formal conditions through regulation, funding, quality assurance, admissions requirements, and research expectations. Universities translate these conditions into practice through their organisational structures, academic practices, and research environments (McAlpine & Norton, 2006; McAlpine, 2013; Taylor, 2023).

Figure 1 conceptualises this relationship across three elements: national policy context, institutional capacity, and doctoral outcomes. Institutional capacity comprises five interrelated domains (supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity) and represents the organisational conditions through which policy is translated into doctoral practice.

Figure 1.
Institutional Capacity and Doctoral Education: A Conceptual Framework



Note. The framework illustrates the relationship between the national policy context, five interrelated domains of institutional capacity, and doctoral outcomes. The relationship between institutional capacity and outcomes is theoretically informed and is not empirically tested in this study.

Source. Authors' conceptualisation informed by McAlpine and Norton (2006), McAlpine (2013), EUA Council for Doctoral Education (2016), Taylor (2023), and Skopek et al. (2022).

The framework does not assume a direct causal relationship between institutional capacity and the national indicators analysed here. The available data are aggregated and contain no university-level measures of the five domains. Institutional capacity therefore functions as an interpretive framework rather than an explanatory variable in the statistical sense.

Methodology

Research design and data sources

This study employs descriptive secondary-data analysis combined with theoretically informed interpretation. It examines national trends in doctoral education in Kazakhstan between 2021 and 2024 and interprets them through the institutional capacity framework developed in the preceding sections.

The empirical analysis draws on official national statistics reported by the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2025), based on Bureau of National Statistics data. Three indicators are examined: doctoral admissions, total doctoral graduates, and graduates completing with dissertation defence. These indicators provide a system-level picture of changes in doctoral provision and outcomes but do not include institution-level information on supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, or research integrity.

International and Kazakhstan-focused scholarship is therefore used to provide the conceptual basis for

interpreting the observed trends. The study does not seek to establish causal relationships between institutional conditions and doctoral outcomes.

Data analysis

The analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the three national indicators were examined descriptively to identify changes and annual patterns between 2021 and 2024. Second, these patterns were interpreted through the five domains of institutional capacity identified in the literature: supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity. For each year, the proportion of graduates completing with dissertation defence was calculated by dividing the number of graduates with dissertation defence by the total number of doctoral graduates.

The indicators are treated as annual system-level measures rather than as a longitudinal cohort series. Admissions and graduation figures relate to different groups of doctoral candidates, while graduates completing with dissertation defence constitute a subset of total graduates in each year. Consequently, comparisons across these indicators are used to describe system development rather than to calculate cohort completion rates.

Institutional capacity is likewise not inferred directly from the statistical data. Rather, the observed trends identify issues requiring further explanation, while the conceptual framework provides theoretically grounded organisational dimensions through which those issues can be examined.

Limitations

The study has two principal limitations. First, aggregated national statistics cannot reveal variation across universities, disciplines, or doctoral programmes, nor can they track individual cohorts over time. Second, the available data do not directly measure the five domains of institutional capacity. The framework is therefore used for interpretation rather than causal explanation.

Future research should test the proposed relationships using institution-level data, comparative case studies, qualitative evidence from doctoral candidates and supervisors, and longitudinal analysis of doctoral progression.

Results

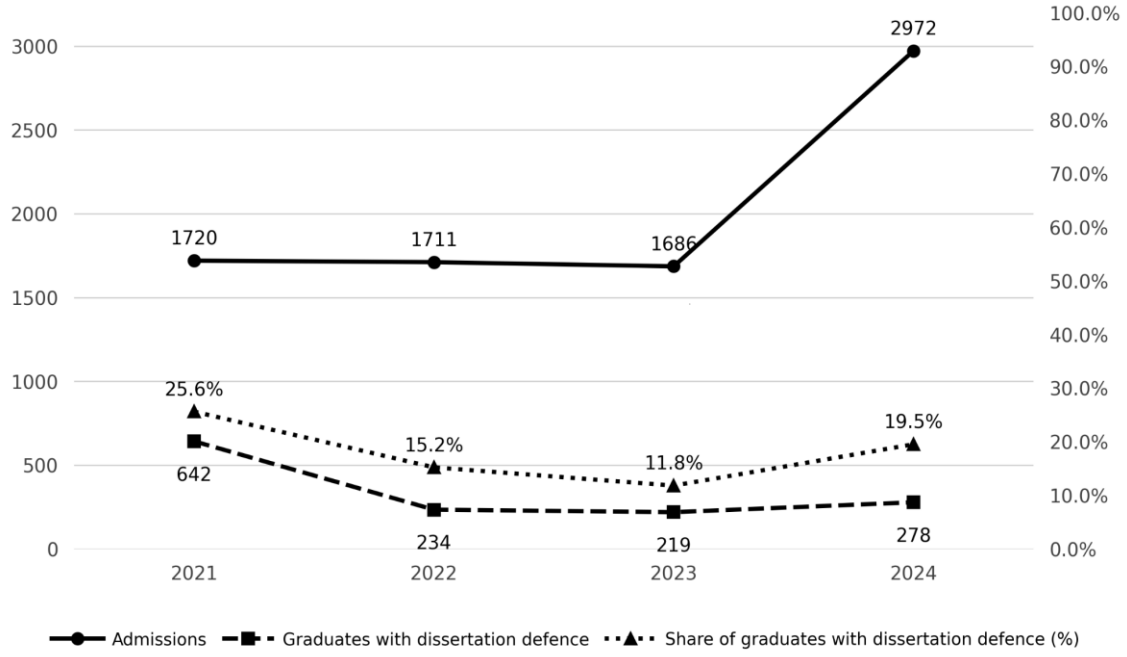
Official statistics indicate substantial but uneven change in doctoral education in Kazakhstan between 2021 and 2024. Doctoral admissions remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2023, at 1,720, 1,711 and 1,686 respectively, before increasing sharply to 2,972 in 2024. Overall, admissions were approximately 73% higher in 2024 than in 2021 (National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2025).

Patterns of doctoral completion within the normative period differed from those of admissions. The number of doctoral graduates declined from 2,503 in 2021 to 1,536 in 2022, increased to 1,854 in 2023, and then fell to 1,422 in 2024. The number of graduates completing with dissertation defence also declined substantially, from 642 in 2021 to 234 in 2022 and 219 in 2023, before increasing to 278 in 2024.

As a proportion of all doctoral graduates, those graduating with dissertation defence accounted for approximately 25.6% in 2021, 15.2% in 2022, 11.8% in 2023, and 19.5% in 2024. Thus, the proportion partially recovered in 2024 after declining in the preceding two years but remained below its 2021 level. These percentages are calculated from the official graduation data and should not be interpreted as cohort completion rates.

Figure 2.

National Trends in Doctoral Education in Kazakhstan, 2021–2024



Note. Admissions and graduates with dissertation defence are shown as annual counts. The percentage series represents graduates with dissertation defence as a proportion of total doctoral graduates in each year. These indicators are annual system-level measures and should not be interpreted as a longitudinal cohort completion rate.

Source. National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2025), Table 2.13, based on Bureau of National Statistics data.

Taken together, the results show that changes in doctoral participation, graduation, and dissertation defence did not follow a common trajectory between 2021 and 2024. The national statistics cannot explain the causes of these differences, but they indicate that growth in admissions does not necessarily correspond with parallel changes in other system-level indicators. These patterns provide the empirical basis for examining the organisational conditions through which universities support PhD provision during periods of expansion.

Discussion

Supervision and research environments

The national statistics do not provide evidence about the quality of doctoral supervision in Kazakhstan. They do, however, make supervisory capacity an important consideration in the context of expanding doctoral admissions. Larger doctoral cohorts increase demand for experienced supervisors, regular feedback, mentoring, academic guidance, and opportunities for research collaboration. The implications of such growth depend not only on the number of available supervisors but also on how universities organise and support supervisory work through workload allocation, professional development, co-supervision, mentoring, and quality assurance (Halse & Malfroy, 2010; McAlpine, 2013; Guarimata-Salinas et al., 2024).

This perspective shifts attention from individual supervisors towards institutional responsibility. Maintaining consistent supervisory support during expansion requires organisational systems capable of responding to growth in doctoral participation. The sharp increase in admissions observed in 2024 does not demonstrate that existing supervisory capacity is insufficient, but it reinforces the importance of examining whether institutional support develops alongside increases in doctoral numbers.

The same consideration applies to research environments. Doctoral development extends beyond the supervisor–candidate relationship. Participation in research groups, seminars, collaborative projects, conferences, and scholarly networks provides candidates with opportunities for intellectual exchange, methodological development, and integration into research communities (McAlpine & Norton, 2006;

Rönkkönen et al., 2024). The concept of critical mass is therefore particularly relevant, as universities differ in the concentrations of research expertise, activity, and infrastructure available to doctoral candidates (EUA Council for Doctoral Education, 2016).

The national data cannot assess these institutional differences. Nevertheless, they highlight an important distinction: increasing the number of doctoral places is not equivalent to increasing doctoral research capacity. Sustainable expansion requires attention to the supervisory and research environments within which additional doctoral candidates are expected to develop as researchers.

Governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity

Expansion also increases organisational demands associated with programme governance and doctoral progression. National regulation can establish degree requirements and minimum standards, but universities remain responsible for translating these requirements into programme organisation, academic oversight, candidate support, and quality assurance. Structured annual reviews, milestone assessments, doctoral committees, and early intervention mechanisms can strengthen institutional oversight of candidate progression and reduce reliance on informal supervisory arrangements alone (McAlpine, 2013; Skopek et al., 2022).

The national patterns of graduation and dissertation defence do not demonstrate that progress-monitoring arrangements are inadequate in Kazakhstan. However, the proportion of graduates completing with dissertation defence was lower in 2024 than in 2021, despite some recovery from the lower levels recorded in 2022 and 2023. This suggests the value of complementing aggregate national statistics with information on how universities monitor doctoral progression, respond to delays, and coordinate academic support.

Such evidence would allow policy makers to distinguish more clearly between system-level indicators and the institutional processes underlying them. Measures of supervisory workload, milestone completion, doctoral participation in research, and access to academic support could complement existing indicators of admissions and graduation.

Research integrity forms a further part of this institutional environment. Responsible research is influenced not only by individual conduct but also by university policies, publication expectations, ethics education, assessment procedures, supervisory support, and academic cultures (Abdi et al., 2021). This issue is particularly relevant in Kazakhstan, where publication requirements have become an important feature of doctoral education and have been shown to interact with academic incentives, institutional expectations, and research practices (Kuzhabekova, 2025; Bayanbayeva, 2026; Shamatov et al., 2026).

Including research integrity within the framework does not imply that the observed patterns of graduation or dissertation defence reflect integrity problems. Rather, it recognises that high-quality doctoral provision depends on institutional environments capable of supporting responsible research while managing the academic pressures associated with publication and doctoral progression.

From system expansion to institutional development

The central interpretation emerging from the analysis is that the development of PhD provision is neither linear nor uniform. The findings point to an uneven relationship between expansion in doctoral participation and patterns of graduation and dissertation defence. This does not in itself indicate deterioration in the PhD system. Rather, it suggests that different dimensions of system development may move at different rates.

This distinction can be understood in terms of two related but analytically separate processes. The first is system expansion, reflected in regulatory reform, increased opportunities for PhD study, and growth in admissions. The second is institutional development, reflected in universities' capacity to sustain supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity.

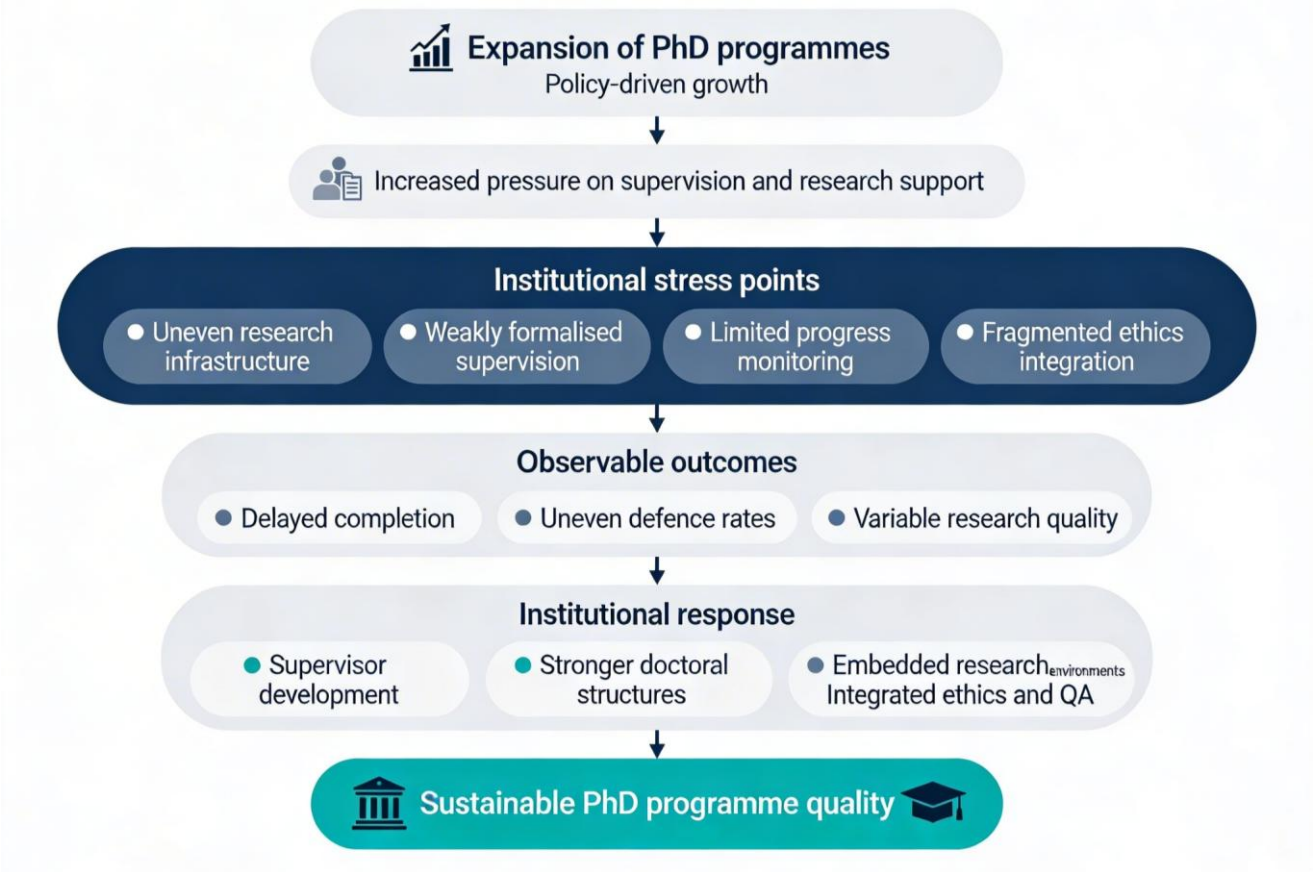
These processes need not develop at the same pace. Changes in regulation and the number of available PhD places can occur relatively rapidly, whereas experienced supervisory communities, mature research environments, effective governance systems, and strong research cultures develop cumulatively over time (Skopek et al., 2022; Taylor, 2023). Evidence from Uzbekistan similarly illustrates how expansion and reform of PhD provision can interact with institutional capacity constraints and organisational practices (Ruziev et al., 2026).

The Kazakhstan data do not demonstrate that institutional capacity has failed to keep pace with expansion, nor do they establish a causal relationship between organisational conditions and PhD outcomes. They show instead that different components of the national PhD system have followed different trajectories during a period of expansion. Institutional capacity therefore becomes an important object of empirical

investigation: it provides a basis for asking how universities translate system-level growth into sustainable conditions for PhD training and research.

Figure 3.

Institutional pathway linking doctoral expansion and programme sustainability in Kazakhstan



Implications for policy and research

The analysis has three main implications. First, national monitoring of doctoral education could complement admissions and graduation statistics with indicators of institutional capacity. Relevant measures could include supervisory resources and workloads, doctoral participation in research environments, progress-monitoring arrangements, and access to academic and research support. Such information would help distinguish growth in doctoral provision from development of the organisational capacity required to sustain it.

Second, further expansion in doctoral admissions should be considered alongside institutional readiness. This does not imply restricting doctoral growth. Rather, expansion should be accompanied by attention to the supervisory resources, research environments, governance arrangements, and academic support available within universities.

Third, the institutional capacity framework proposed in this study requires empirical testing. Future research should examine variation across universities and disciplines using institutional administrative data, interviews with doctoral candidates and supervisors, analysis of programme governance, and comparative case studies. Longitudinal research would be particularly valuable for examining how institutional capacity develops in relation to changes in doctoral participation, progression, graduation, and dissertation defence.

Conclusion

Kazakhstan has substantially expanded PhD provision while continuing to reform the regulatory framework governing PhD programmes. The national trends examined in this study show that different dimensions of the system have not followed the same trajectory: admissions remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2023 before increasing sharply in 2024, while graduation and dissertation defence followed different patterns. These findings reinforce the need to examine PhD development not only through system-level

expansion but also through the organisational conditions that support it.

This article proposes institutional capacity as a framework for such analysis. It brings together five interrelated organisational domains as supervision, research environments, governance, progress monitoring, and research integrity, and distinguishes system expansion from the institutional development required to sustain it. The framework is interpretive rather than directly measured, but it identifies organisational conditions that aggregate national statistics cannot capture.

The practical implication is that regulatory reform and growth in doctoral participation should be accompanied by attention to universities' supervisory capacity, research environments, academic support, governance, and research integrity systems. Future research should test these relationships using institution-level, comparative, and longitudinal evidence. Although developed through the Kazakhstan case, the distinction between system expansion and institutional development may also provide a useful perspective for analysing doctoral education in other higher education systems experiencing rapid growth.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declare no potential conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

Declaration of the use of AI

The author declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript.

References

Abdi, S., Pizzolato, D., Nemery, B., & Dierickx, K. (2021). Educating PhD students in research integrity in Europe. Science and Engineering Ethics, 27, Article 5. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-021-00290-0

Bayanbayeva, A. (2026). The impact of the 'publish or perish' culture on research practices and academic life in Kazakhstan: Challenges and consequences in the age of global university rankings. Higher Education Research & Development, 45(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2025.2526051

EUA Council for Doctoral Education. (2016). Doctoral education: Taking Salzburg forward – Implementation and new challenges. European University Association.

Guarimata-Salinas, G., Carvajal, J. J., & Jiménez López, M. D. (2024). Redefining the role of doctoral supervisors: A multicultural examination of labels and functions in contemporary doctoral education. Higher Education, 88, 1305–1330. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-01171-0

Halse, C., & Malfroy, J. (2010). Retheorizing doctoral supervision as professional work. Studies in Higher Education, 35(1), 79–92. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070902906798

Ibraev, A. Zh., Kul'evskaya, Y. G., Ulez'ko, G. G., & Galants, E. A. (2015). Reforming the system of research-staff training: Doctoral (Ph.D.) education in Kazakhstan. Scientific and Technical Information Processing, 42, 78–84. https://doi.org/10.3103/S0147688215020082

Kuzhabekova, A. (2020). Development and transformation of doctoral education in Kazakhstan. In M. Yudkevich, P. G. Altbach, & H. de Wit (Eds.), Trends and issues in doctoral education: A global perspective (pp. 340–362). SAGE Publications. https://doi.org/10.4135/9789353885991.n14

Kuzhabekova, A. (2025). Ph.D. publication requirement and its effects on research productivity trends in Kazakhstan. Higher Education Quarterly, 79(1), Article e12590. https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12590

Lee, A. (2008). How are doctoral students supervised? Concepts of doctoral research supervision. Studies in Higher Education, 33(3), 267–281. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070802049202

McAlpine, L. (2013). Doctoral supervision: Not an individual but a collective institutional responsibility. Journal for the Study of Education and Development, 36(3), 259–280. https://doi.org/10.1174/021037013807533061

McAlpine, L., & Norton, J. (2006). Reframing our approach to doctoral programs: An integrative framework for action and research. Higher Education Research & Development, 25(1), 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360500453012

National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2025). Report of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan under

the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Science for 2024. Almaty. ISBN 9965-25-129-0.

Rönkkönen, S., Tikkanen, L., Virtanen, V., & Pyhältö, K. (2024). The impact of supervisor and research community support on PhD candidates' research engagement. European Journal of Higher Education, 14(4), 536–553. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568235.2023.2229565

Ruziev, K., Rabbimova, D., & Mamasolieva, M. (2026). Reforming doctoral education in Uzbekistan: Models, rules and norms of behaviour. Higher Education Policy, 39, 500–526. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-025-00396-1

Satpayeva, Z., Kangalakova, D., Kakizhanova, T., & Konstantinova, K. (2025). Challenges of Ph.D. training in social sciences and humanities in Kazakhstani universities. Knowledge and Performance Management, 9(1), 1–15. https://doi.org/10.21511/kpm.09(1).2025.01

Shamatov, D., Ispambetova, B., Baikenov, K., & Kuzhabekova, A. (2026). Research integrity under publication requirements: A qualitative study of doctoral education in Kazakhstan. International Journal for Educational Integrity, 22, Article 9. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40979-026-00219-9

Skopek, J., Triventi, M., & Blossfeld, H.-P. (2022). How do institutional factors shape PhD completion rates? An analysis of long-term changes in a European doctoral program. Studies in Higher Education, 47(2), 318–337. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1744125

Taylor, S. (2023). The changing landscape of doctoral education: A framework for analysis and introduction to the special issue. Innovations in Education and Teaching International, 60(5), 606–622. https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2023.2237962

Tokatligil, Y., Saliyeva, A., Mambetalina, A., Nurmanbetova, J., & Karmelyuk, A. (2025). Co-supervision in Kazakhstan PhD programs: The Kazakhstani + international co-supervisor model. International Journal of Doctoral Studies, 20, Article 15. https://doi.org/10.28945/5626

Information about authors

Aida Sagintayeva – PhD, Vice Provost for Academic Planning and Budget, Dean of the Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan, asagintayeva@nu.edu.kz, ORCID iD: 0000-0001-6249-0840 ***(corresponding author)***

Gulmira Qanay – PhD, Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan, gkanayeva@nu.edu.kz, ORCID: 0000-0003-4935-6027

Received: 21.03.2026
Revised: 29.05.2026
Revised: 12.08.2026
Accepted: 25.08.2026
Published: 30.06.2026

Type: Research Article