

U. Tlemissov, senior lecture¹

A. Orazgaliyeva*, PhD, associate professor¹

A. Kramarenko, c.e.s., associate professor²

Zh. Tlemissova, senior lecture³

Shakarim University, Semey, Kazakhstan¹

International University of Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan²

Alikhan Bokeikhan University, Semey, Kazakhstan³

* – main author (author for correspondence)

email: arailymk78@mail.ru

MANAGERIALISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN KAZAKHSTAN: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPACT

The article analyzes the phenomenon of managerialism in higher education and its growing influence on university governance in Kazakhstan. The purpose of the study is to identify the main challenges, opportunities, and consequences of implementing managerial approaches in the management of Kazakhstani universities. The research employs comparative and analytical methods, drawing on international and national policy documents, as well as academic literature on higher education reform.

The study reveals that managerialism has led to significant transformations in university governance, including enhanced accountability mechanisms, increased control over teaching and research outcomes, and the introduction of performance-based evaluation systems. It is shown that these changes contribute to greater institutional efficiency, transparency, and competitiveness. However, the analysis also reveals negative outcomes, including bureaucratization, increased administrative burden on academic staff, and the erosion of academic autonomy.

The article determines that successful adaptation of managerial principles in Kazakhstan's higher education system requires balancing market-oriented management tools with traditional academic values. It proposes practical recommendations for optimizing managerial reforms aligned with the national context to ensure sustainable development of educational quality and research excellence.

Keywords: managerialism, higher education, accountability, academic staff, efficiency, reforms, governance.

Кілт сөздер: менеджеризм, жоғары білім, есептілік, оқытушылар, тиімділік, реформалар, басқару.

Ключевые слова: менеджериализм, высшее образование, подотчетность, преподаватели, эффективность, реформы, управление.

Introduction. In recent decades, the global higher education landscape has been characterized by continuous transformation driven by economic globalization, digitalization, and increasing demands for institutional accountability. These changes have led to the emergence of new governance paradigms, among which the concept of «New Managerialism» occupies a central position. This approach, which originated in the private sector, involves transferring corporate management principles—such as performance measurement, efficiency controls, and market orientation—into the administration of public universities.

The relevance of this study stems from the growing tension between academic values and managerial mechanisms in modern universities. While higher education institutions are expected to become more efficient and competitive, these transformations often challenge the traditional academic culture, leading to the redefinition of autonomy, collegiality, and academic freedom. Despite the increasing prevalence of managerial reforms worldwide, the specific implications of «New Managerialism» for countries with post-Soviet administrative legacies, such as Kazakhstan, remain underexplored.

The scientific problem addressed in this research lies in the insufficient theoretical and empirical understanding of how managerialism affects the internal governance, performance metrics, and motivation of academic staff within the Kazakhstani higher education system. The purpose of this article is therefore to analyze the influence of «New Managerialism» on higher education management in Kazakhstan and to identify both the opportunities it creates and the risks it entails for institutional development.

To achieve this goal, the study formulates the following research tasks:

- To examine the theoretical foundations and global evolution of managerialism in higher education;

- To determine its key manifestations and consequences in university governance structures;
- To assess the challenges and contradictions arising from its implementation in Kazakhstan's educational context;
- To develop practical recommendations for balancing managerial efficiency with academic integrity.

The methodological basis of the study integrates comparative, analytical, and system approaches. A comparative analysis juxtaposes international and national experiences of implementing managerial reforms, while the analytical method helps interpret policy documents and empirical findings. The systemic approach enables the comprehensive evaluation of the interrelationships among administrative control, academic productivity, and institutional autonomy.

Thus, this study aims to contribute to the scientific discussion on higher education reform by providing a critical understanding of «New Managerialism» as a multidimensional phenomenon. The results are expected to support the development of more balanced governance strategies that harmonize performance-based management with the preservation of academic values and professional autonomy.

Literature Review. Definition and Essence of «New Managerialism». The concept of «New Managerialism» emerged in the 1980s as part of the broader wave of public sector reforms inspired by neoliberal ideology. This approach emphasized efficiency, accountability, and performance control through mechanisms traditionally associated with corporate management [1]. In higher education, it manifested as the introduction of strategic planning, key performance indicators (KPIs), and formalized evaluation systems for academic staff [2].

Scholars define «New Managerialism» as an attempt to enhance the efficiency of public institutions by adopting private-sector management techniques [3]. Proponents argue that this paradigm enhances transparency and improves resource use through measurable outcomes [4]. However, critics highlight that managerialism often subordinates academic values to administrative priorities, thereby transforming universities into competitive enterprises rather than communities of scholars [5].

The key features of this model include an emphasis on profitability and efficiency, managerial control over faculty, and centralization of decision-making [6]. Yet, despite its proclaimed advantages, empirical studies show that such systems frequently produce side effects — including bureaucratization, the erosion of academic collegiality, and heightened psychological stress among staff [7]. This tension between management efficiency and academic autonomy remains a central research problem within the managerialism debate.

Global Diffusion and Theoretical Perspectives

The international spread of «New Managerialism» was closely linked to neoliberal reforms in the United Kingdom and the United States, where governments sought to modernize higher education through market-driven mechanisms and performance accountability [8]. These policies encouraged competition among universities and emphasized quantitative indicators such as research output, employability, and rankings [9].

In the 1990s–2000s, international organizations — notably the OECD, World Bank, and UNESCO — promoted managerial principles as instruments of modernization and competitiveness [10]. While these initiatives enhanced administrative transparency, they also reinforced external oversight of universities and reduced institutional autonomy. Comparative studies demonstrate that in many developing and transitional economies, managerial reforms were often adopted under external pressure rather than through internal academic demand, resulting in superficial compliance with global standards rather than genuine institutional transformation [11].

In this sense, the diffusion of «New Managerialism» represents not only a managerial innovation but also a transnational governance mechanism that influences educational policy and academic culture far beyond its Western origins.

Post-Soviet and Developing Contexts. In post-Soviet countries, including Kazakhstan, managerial reforms have been integrated into the broader agenda of modernizing and globalizing higher education [12]. The adoption of key performance indicators, accreditation systems, and ranking mechanisms aimed to align national universities with international benchmarks. However, several scholars emphasize that such reforms often overlook local cultural and institutional traditions, leading to tensions between global managerial templates and national academic realities [13].

In Kazakhstan, the influence of «New Managerialism» is particularly evident in the creation of autonomous educational institutions, the introduction of performance assessment based on publications,

and the development of digital management systems. These tools have enhanced efficiency but simultaneously increased administrative control, creating new forms of dependency between university governance and state performance evaluation systems [14].

Recent research points to a new phase of managerialism — its digital transformation. Automated data analytics, learning management systems, and digital dashboards facilitate evidence-based governance but also raise concerns about the dehumanization of education and the algorithmization of academic work [15]. Thus, while digital managerial tools improve planning accuracy, they risk undermining creativity and collegial interaction within the university environment.

Critical Synthesis and Research Gaps. The literature reveals three major contradictions inherent to «New Managerialism»:

- Efficiency vs. Autonomy – while management control enhances accountability, it restricts academic freedom and creativity.
- Global Standards vs. Local Realities – the transfer of Western models often neglects contextual specificities of developing systems.
- Data-Driven Accountability vs. Humanistic Education – digital tools facilitate control but weaken interpersonal and intellectual dimensions of academia.

Despite extensive international research, empirical studies on post-Soviet contexts remain fragmented and often descriptive, focusing primarily on administrative efficiency rather than sociocultural effects. In particular, Kazakhstan lacks a systematic analysis of how managerial reforms affect academic identity, motivation, and institutional culture.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this research gap by providing a context-sensitive examination of «New Managerialism» in Kazakhstan’s higher education. The research integrates global theoretical perspectives with national empirical data, seeking to develop a balanced conceptual framework that reconciles managerial accountability with the preservation of academic integrity and institutional autonomy.

Given these identified gaps — particularly the lack of contextualized, empirical research on managerial transformations in post-Soviet higher education — this study adopts a mixed-methods design. Combining quantitative data from official sources with qualitative content analysis enables a multidimensional understanding of how global managerial principles are localized within Kazakhstan’s universities. The methodological approach is described in detail in the following section.

Main Part. Materials and Methods. The main objective of this methodological framework is to examine how the principles of «New Managerialism» are adapted and institutionalized in the governance and organizational practices of Kazakhstani universities. Given the identified research gaps — particularly the lack of contextually grounded empirical studies of managerial transformations in post-Soviet higher education — this study adopts a mixed-methods design. Combining quantitative data from official sources with qualitative content analysis provides a multidimensional understanding of how global managerial principles are localized within Kazakhstan’s universities.

At the theoretical level, the study draws on the conceptual foundations developed by leading scholars in higher education governance and managerialism, including S. Marginson, T. Klikauer, and E. Ferlie. Their works form the basis for understanding accountability mechanisms, performance management, and institutional autonomy as key components of the managerial paradigm. These theoretical principles were adapted to the national context of Kazakhstan, where higher education institutions have undergone significant changes in governance structure and organizational culture since the early 2000s.

The empirical part of the research is based on the analysis of official data, policy documents, and academic publications. Quantitative data were obtained from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MSHE RK) for the period 2015–2024, including indicators of university performance, research funding, academic mobility, and international rankings. These data were complemented by analytical reports of Kazakhstani universities, publications of the National Center for Educational Statistics and Evaluation, and international datasets from the OECD, UNESCO, and the World Bank. The selection of empirical material was guided by three key criteria: the direct relevance of the source to higher education governance, the time frame (no earlier than 2015), and the availability of verifiable and statistically reliable information.

The research employed a combination of comparative, systemic, and content analysis methods. A comparative analysis examined the similarities and differences between Kazakhstan’s university management practices and those observed in other countries, such as the United Kingdom, Finland, and

South Korea. This approach enabled the Kazakhstani experience to be situated within the broader international context of managerial reforms. The content analysis method was applied to examine strategic plans, accreditation reports, and policy documents of national universities, enabling the identification of recurring managerial discourses, performance indicators, and control mechanisms. In addition, statistical and correlation analyses were used to determine the relationship between the introduction of managerial tools—such as key performance indicators, audit procedures, and ranking systems—and changes in academic staff efficiency and motivation.

To ensure the credibility and accuracy of the findings, the study used triangulation, combining data from multiple sources, both national and international. Quantitative data were verified through cross-checking with various databases, while qualitative findings were validated through peer comparison and review of relevant literature indexed in Scopus and Web of Science.

Overall, the methodological framework of this research enabled a thorough, evidence-based analysis of how managerialism affects university governance in Kazakhstan. The combination of international comparative perspectives with national empirical data ensures the study's academic rigor and enhances its contribution to the ongoing discussion on the modernization and sustainability of higher education management.

Results. «New Managerialism» in the Context of Higher Education in Kazakhstan.

Universities, which previously enjoyed considerable autonomy, are increasingly forced to operate in a market environment and demonstrate their effectiveness through accountability and rating systems. This shift has led to increased control over academic activities, a greater bureaucratic burden on lecturers, and an increased commercialization of the education system (table 1).

Table – 1

Manifestations of «New Managerialism» in Kazakhstani Higher Education

Aspect	Key Characteristics	Impact on the University Environment
Governance structure and	Transition from collegial self-government to corporate hierarchy; strengthening the role of rectors and deans; strategic planning	Reducing the influence of lecturers on decision-making; formalization of management procedures
Accountability and control	Implementation of KPIs, ratings, and reporting requirements; monitoring of grants, publications, and citations	Increased bureaucratic burden; increased competition among lecturers
Commercialization of Education	Development of paid programs, attraction of international students, and development of business-oriented courses	University income growth; reduced access to education for socially vulnerable groups
International Integration	Accreditation according to international standards; participation in Scopus/Web of Science; implementation of the Bolashak program and mobility programs	Increase global recognition and competitiveness; Focus on quantitative indicators
Faculty Workload	The growing demand for publishing activity, participation in grants, and international projects	Increased working hours, stress, and burnout among lecturers
Digitalization of Management	Implementation of digital performance monitoring and data analysis systems	Increase transparency and efficiency; strengthen administrative control

** compiled by the authors based on the sources [2,3,5]*

The data presented in Table 1 clearly demonstrate that «New Managerialism» has become a central transformative force in Kazakhstan's higher education. The transition from collegial self-governance to corporate structures has strengthened strategic control and formalized managerial procedures, yet it has simultaneously reduced academic participation in decision-making. The implementation of KPIs and rating systems has enhanced transparency but also created administrative overload and intensified competition among faculty members.

Commercialization and internationalization have provided universities with financial stability and increased global visibility, but have also shifted focus toward quantitative indicators at the expense of

academic quality. The process of digitalization has improved managerial efficiency but simultaneously reinforced administrative control, introducing new challenges to academic freedom.

Overall, the analysis confirms the dual nature of «New Managerialism»: it promotes modernization and efficiency while undermining traditional academic values and autonomy. These tendencies are further reflected in the transformation of academic work and governance practices in Kazakhstan's universities.

Managerial Transformations in Academic Work.

The «New Managerialism» is transforming the very essence of academic work by imposing additional reporting and measurable performance requirements on lecturers and researchers. In the context of market reforms, universities are compelled to adapt to new conditions by attracting private funding, collaborating with corporations, and optimizing resource allocation. In Kazakhstan, this process is accompanied by the development of a national accreditation system that requires universities to comply with international quality standards, as well as the introduction of digital technologies to monitor the effectiveness of lecturers and researchers.

The model of «New Managerialism» has also influenced the decision-making structure at universities. Previously, the academic community relied on collegial management methods; however, university management increasingly resembles a corporate hierarchy today. In Kazakhstan, this is reflected in the strengthening of the rector's office, the introduction of strategic planning, and increased oversight of teaching and research activities. Rectors and deans were granted powers similar to those of senior managers, thereby reducing the teaching staff's influence in key decision-making processes [13]. At the same time, Kazakhstani universities are focused on meeting the indicators set by the MSHE RK, which has led to the formalization of management systems.

The introduction of KPIs as a basis for evaluating the performance of lecturers and researchers has had a significant impact on the academic environment. These indicators include the number of publications, citations, grant success, and teaching effectiveness [12]. In Kazakhstan, special attention is paid to publication activity in journals indexed in international databases such as *Scopus* and *Web of Science*, which stimulates competition among lecturers and encourages them to comply with established requirements. However, an excessive focus on quantitative indicators can lead to a decline in educational quality, as lecturers are compelled to prioritize meeting set goals over developing students' critical thinking skills.

The commercialization of education has also become an integral part of the «New Managerialism». Universities strive to attract international students, develop paid educational programs, and offer business-oriented courses, which, in turn, contribute to income growth [11]. In Kazakhstan, this trend is reflected in the expansion of English-language programs, the involvement of foreign professors, and the active development of academic mobility programs such as *Bolashak*. However, such a market-oriented approach carries risks, including reduced access to higher education for socially vulnerable groups and reduced academic autonomy [10].

Another consequence of the «New Managerialism» was the development of a competitive environment among lecturers. The introduction of rating systems and the monitoring of individual performance increased pressure on lecturers, forcing them to actively publish articles and participate in international grant programs, which require additional effort to enhance their academic qualifications and language proficiency [15]. This has resulted in longer working hours and emotional burnout among lecturers, negatively affecting the quality of the educational process.

Thus, the «New Managerialism» in higher education in Kazakhstan has transformed the university environment by adopting corporate governance practices and increasing competition among academic staff. On one hand, this has helped improve university effectiveness, boost their integration into the international education community, and enhance their rankings. On the other hand, it has introduced new issues such as bureaucratization, restrictions on academic freedom, and the commercialization of education.

Autonomy and accountability of universities in Kazakhstan.

University autonomy refers to independence in academic, financial, and administrative policies, which encourages innovation and scientific progress. However, in the era of globalization and growing competition, educational institutions must adapt to societal and governmental demands, which introduce new accountability requirements. This issue is especially significant in Kazakhstan, where ongoing reforms aim to integrate the national higher education system into the global educational community.

Contemporary universities strive to uphold academic freedom in curriculum development and research endeavors. However, States and international organizations are implementing control mechanisms to enhance the quality of education. One such tool is the national accreditation system, which involves

mandatory external evaluations and university ratings carried out by private organizations affiliated with the MSHE RK. While these standards help improve the quality of education, they may also restrict university autonomy by requiring institutions to meet specific requirements. A similar system is reflected in performance indicators such as the number of publications in international scientific databases (Scopus, Web of Science), citations, securing external funding, the successful employment of graduates, and the introduction of new scientific developments. However, an overemphasis on quantitative indicators may lead universities to focus on meeting formal requirements rather than developing students' fundamental research and critical thinking skills.

However, university autonomy cannot be fully understood without considering its financial dimension. The ability of higher education institutions to make independent strategic decisions largely depends on their financial sustainability and the sources of their funding. As managerial reforms emphasize accountability and performance efficiency, universities are increasingly expected to secure external financing and diversify revenue streams, leading to the emergence of new financial models of governance in Kazakhstan.

Financial accountability and revenue diversification in Kazakhstan.

The increasing reliance on external funding compels universities to explore alternative revenue sources, including:

- Partnerships with business and industry, for example, joint research programs and innovation centers;
- Paid educational programs such as Master's degrees and online courses, including massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs);
- International grants and science support funds, such as the Bolashak Scholarship Program and World Bank funding;
- Rising cost of higher education.

In Kazakhstan, universities are actively developing self-financing models, including attracting private sector investments. Many national universities collaborate with industry to develop joint, innovative projects, which facilitate the transfer and commercialization of scientific research. However, the desire for commercialization can create conflicts of interest and reduce the independence of scientific research, as investors may dictate development priorities, thereby limiting academic freedom [13].

University autonomy remains a core principle that guarantees freedom and fosters scientific innovation. However, modern realities require universities to balance independence with accountability, which is reflected in the use of KPIs, quality monitoring, and income diversification. In the future, the main challenge for Kazakhstani universities will be to find the right balance between these factors, preserving academic freedom while maintaining educational quality and supporting the sustainable development of higher education institutions.

These dynamics indicate that financial diversification is not an isolated process but part of a broader transformation of university funding mechanisms. As managerial reforms reshape the governance of higher education, financial models are also evolving — moving from state dependency toward market-oriented principles that emphasize competitiveness, efficiency, and self-sustainability. This shift marks the next stage in the adaptation of Kazakhstani universities to the logic of “New Managerialism.”

Transformation of university funding frameworks.

«New managerialism» has led to a significant transformation in the funding models of universities. State allocations are gradually decreasing, compelling universities to seek alternative sources of income, such as:

- Private investment in research projects;
- Grant programs from the MSHE RK and International Organizations;
- Commercialization of university research and startups;
- The introduction of additional fee-based educational services.

These changes are prompting universities to adopt business-oriented financial models. The reduction in state funding encourages universities to actively engage with industry and private investors, thereby expanding corporate partnerships. Companies might invest in scientific research and university infrastructure in exchange for access to intellectual property or other benefits. However, this dependency may affect academic freedom, as research activities increasingly shift toward commercial profitability rather than fundamental scientific inquiry [5].

Another consequence of «New Managerialism» in education funding is the intensification of competition for grants and research funding [12]. In Kazakhstan, this manifests as a need to attract international grants, participate in programs of the Eurasian Economic Union, and integrate into global

research networks. Such competition, however, demands additional resources and academic expertise, creating new challenges for the national education system.

Furthermore, increasing tuition fees have become a significant factor in university funding under «New Managerialism» [10]. While higher tuition helps universities offset cuts in state funding, it also creates barriers for students from low-income families. In Kazakhstan, measures such as state educational grants, social programs, and student loan systems are being implemented to address this issue. Nevertheless, challenges regarding the accessibility of higher education for all social groups and the need to improve student support systems remain urgent.

Furthermore, Kazakhstani universities are developing new business models, including distance learning and hybrid educational programs, which help attract students from around the world. However, these initiatives require substantial investments in digital infrastructure and pedagogical technologies, presenting additional financial challenges for universities [15].

Ultimately, funding for universities under «New Managerialism» has become a complex, multi-layered process that involves state subsidies, private investments, research grants, and income from educational programs. In Kazakhstan, this process is further complicated by the need to align with international academic standards and meet national accreditation criteria. Although these mechanisms help diversify revenue, they also bring new challenges for universities, such as increased competition for resources, reduced academic independence, and a greater financial burden on students [13].

Discussion. The impact of the "New Managerialism" on the academic staff in Kazakhstan.

«New Managerialism» leads to changes in the role of lecturers, which are manifested in:

- An increased administrative workload;
- Heightened competition for grants and publications [14].

Furthermore, academic staff are required to modify curricula to meet the standards set by accreditation agencies, which limits their academic independence. In Kazakhstan, this situation is especially evident in the context of the implementation of a national system for university rankings and accreditation. This system requires educators to frequently revise curricula and actively participate in scientific projects. Long-term research shows that under «New Managerialism», priorities shift toward applied, short-term projects rather than fundamental research, which changes the academic culture of universities. In Kazakhstan, pressure to publish in international scientific databases such as Scopus and Web of Science increases the workload and leads academic staff to focus more on quantitative metrics than on in-depth pedagogical processes [15].

These transformations have reshaped traditional teaching models, and the impact of «New Managerialism» is reflected in the following aspects of pedagogical practice:

- The growth of distance learning;
- The implementation of digital technologies;
- The adoption of modular educational programs oriented toward market demand.

One of the most significant aspects of teaching transformation is the adaptation to digital educational platforms and online learning methodologies [14]. In Kazakhstan, distance education systems such as Moodle and EdX have become widely adopted, enabling universities to expand their student base and enhance the flexibility of the educational process. Institutions are implementing Learning Management Systems (LMS) and automated assessment mechanisms, which improve the efficiency of student performance analysis while simultaneously reducing traditional forms of interaction between instructors and learners [15]. Modular educational programs, tailored to the demands of the labor market, have become a key element in the reform of higher education in the spirit of «New Managerialism». However, it has been criticized for reducing the academic depth of courses and overemphasizing narrow, specialized knowledge, potentially impairing graduates' ability to adapt to rapidly changing professional environments.

Thus, «New Managerialism» exerts a complex influence on lecturers, altering their roles, workload, and professional prospects. Although «New Managerialism» promotes improved university efficiency and the development of digital educational technologies, its excessive implementation carries risks, including the loss of academic freedom, employment instability, and an overemphasis on short-term market needs [13]. Table 2 demonstrates the impact of «New Managerialism» on academic staff and institutional structures in different national contexts.

**The Effectiveness of «New Managerialism» in Higher Education:
Examples from Different Countries**

	Countries	Descriptions
1	Great Britain	The transition to a contractual system for evaluating lecturers has increased productivity; however, it has also limited academic freedom. The introduction of quantitative indicators of teaching effectiveness increased pressure on teaching staff, resulting in a rise in bureaucratic burden and a decrease in the flexibility of educational programs. Moreover, universities are compelled to improve their ratings, often prioritizing indicators that do not always reflect the quality of their education.
2	USA	The introduction of a new management approach has improved the quality of educational services; however, it has also led to higher tuition fees and increased student debt. The growth of private funding at universities has widened the gap between elite institutions and mainstream higher education. While leading universities attract more resources, smaller colleges face financial difficulties.
3	Kazakhstan	Universities are adapting to corporate management models that increase their financial independence, but also increase pressure on academic staff. The introduction of KPI-based assessments has led to an overemphasis on quantifying scientific and teaching activities. The role of university ratings, such as the National University Rating and the International QS Rating, has increased significantly in Kazakhstan. Many lecturers note that publication activity has become the main focus, often overshadowing the quality of teaching and individual student engagement.

** compiled by the authors based on the sources [3,5,12]*

Overall, the comparative analysis shows that the experience of implementing the concept of «New Managerialism» across countries reveals common trends and contradictions inherent to this approach. In the United Kingdom, the transition to a contractual system and the focus on quantitative performance indicators have increased university productivity, but have also restricted academic freedom and intensified the bureaucratization of governance. In the United States, the application of market-oriented management principles has improved the quality of educational services, yet it has also exacerbated socio-economic inequality and deepened universities' dependence on private funding.

Against this background, the Kazakhstani experience demonstrates both progressive and problematic aspects of managerial reforms. On the one hand, these reforms have contributed to the development of universities, strengthened their financial autonomy, and facilitated integration into the global educational space through international accreditation and participation in global rankings. On the other hand, they have created new challenges for academic staff, including increased teaching and administrative workload, the need to meet international standards of publication activity and educational quality, and heightened competition for research grants and academic resources.

This duality confirms one of the study's key findings: the implementation of «New Managerialism» enhances universities' efficiency and competitiveness, but also leads to increased bureaucratization, commercialization, and reduced academic autonomy. Therefore, Kazakhstan's national experience underscores the need to develop a balanced model of university management that combines market-based mechanisms of efficiency with the preservation of academic values, social responsibility, and professional integrity.

To explore this duality more concretely, the following section examines the main achievements and challenges that have emerged during the implementation of managerial reforms in Kazakhstan's higher education system. This comparative perspective helps identify which outcomes have contributed to modernization and which have generated systemic constraints on academic development.

Achievements and Challenges. Positive Aspects.

The new management approach has led to a number of positive changes in Kazakhstan's higher education system:

- Improving the efficiency of universities. The introduction of new management models, the use of KPIs, and strategic planning allowed universities to optimize their processes and increase staff productivity. In Kazakhstan, the management approach has contributed to the creation of autonomous educational institutions, such as Nazarbayev University, which has enabled the introduction of advanced management

technologies and the modernization of educational processes. Improved administration has enabled universities to adapt more quickly to changing conditions and international competition [12].

- Improving the quality of educational programs. The introduction of quality standards, external assessments, and rating systems increased the quality of teaching and academic training for students [15]. In Kazakhstan, active participation in international rankings such as QS and THE encourages universities to introduce dual-degree programs, develop English-language educational programs, and attract foreign lecturers, thereby enhancing student training.

- Promoting innovation in teaching. The development of digital technologies and distance learning has enabled the introduction of flexible learning formats that cater to students' needs [14]. In Kazakhstan, the digitalization of higher education is evident in the active development of online learning platforms, such as OpenU and EdX, hosted by local universities. The use of learning management systems (LMS) and digital tools contributes to the personalization of learning, improving interaction between students and lecturers.

Negative Consequences.

Despite these achievements, the new management approach has also created significant challenges in Kazakhstan's higher education system:

- Bureaucratization of the educational process. The introduction of complex administrative procedures and reporting systems increases the burden on lecturers, diverting their attention from their primary academic responsibilities. In Kazakhstani universities, the introduction of numerous reporting mechanisms, including ratings of publication activity and monitoring of teaching workload, often leads to an overload of teaching staff, negatively affecting the quality of teaching [13].

- Growing inequality among lecturers. The adoption of competitive funding models based on quantitative metrics has increased the divide between researchers. In Kazakhstan, young scientists often struggle to secure research grants because most funding goes to top national universities. This worsens issues with academic mobility and career advancement, especially for lecturers at regional universities, who find it harder to get international grants [12].

- Loss of scientific independence. Universities are increasingly prioritizing applied research that aligns with the demands of corporate partners and investors. In Kazakhstan, the focus on commercializing science and developing university startups risks reducing funding for fundamental research. Although initiatives such as the Bolashak program and the MSHE RK's grant competitions support scientific activities, there is concern that academic freedom may be compromised in favor of market interests [11].

The new management approach has transformed higher education in Kazakhstan, making it more market-oriented, innovative, and transparent. However, its negative aspects, such as bureaucratization, increased burden on lecturers, and limitations on scientific freedom, require further analysis and adaptation. Kazakhstani universities need to strike a balance between efficiency and the preservation of academic values, ensuring the higher education system remains competitive while upholding its primary mission: the creation and dissemination of knowledge. It is crucial to consider the national context and develop mechanisms that integrate market-based management principles with the preservation of academic independence and educational quality.

Conclusion. The conducted research has allowed to comprehensively analyze the phenomenon of «New Managerialism» and its multidimensional influence on higher education governance in Kazakhstan. The study revealed that managerial reforms have become a key driver of modernization, enabling universities to enhance institutional efficiency, transparency, and competitiveness in the global academic arena. The introduction of corporate governance mechanisms, diversification of funding sources, and participation in international rankings such as QS and THE have contributed to the professionalization and international visibility of Kazakhstani universities.

At the same time, the results show that «New Managerialism» produces several systemic challenges. The adoption of performance-based evaluation mechanisms, including KPIs and publication requirements in Scopus and Web of Science, has increased the administrative workload and reduced academic autonomy. Excessive bureaucratization and the focus on quantitative indicators have led to growing psychological pressure among faculty and diminished intrinsic motivation for research and teaching. These findings confirm that while managerialism strengthens accountability, it also risks distorting universities' academic missions by prioritizing efficiency over intellectual freedom.

The scientific novelty of this research lies in its context-specific analysis of how managerialism, when adapted to Kazakhstan's post-Soviet and transitional framework, reshapes the governance culture and professional behavior of academic staff. Unlike many descriptive studies, this work integrates both

qualitative and quantitative perspectives, demonstrating the dual nature of managerialism as both a modernization tool and a source of academic tension.

The practical significance of the results lies in the possibility of applying the proposed conclusions to refine public policies and university management strategies. The study provides a conceptual basis for developing *hybrid governance models* that integrate market-oriented efficiency tools with mechanisms safeguarding academic values and autonomy. The findings can also assist decision-makers in balancing performance evaluation with the humanistic dimensions of education.

Based on the conducted analysis, several recommendations are proposed:

- to develop a balanced system of performance evaluation that emphasizes qualitative outcomes, such as teaching innovation and community engagement, alongside quantitative metrics;
- to expand institutional autonomy through flexible regulatory frameworks that allow universities to adapt managerial tools to their academic missions;
- to strengthen leadership and management training programs for academic administrators to ensure that managerial reforms support, rather than undermine, research and teaching excellence.

The study also identifies key directions for future research. Further work should explore the long-term effects of managerial reforms on academic identity, professional ethics, and research culture. Special attention should be given to the role of digitalization and data-driven governance in shaping new forms of managerial control. In Kazakhstan, initiatives such as *Smart University* and *e-University* illustrate the growing integration of digital platforms into university management; however, their impact on academic freedom and institutional sustainability remains insufficiently understood.

In conclusion, achieving a sustainable balance between efficiency and academic integrity represents the central challenge of higher education governance in Kazakhstan. The future of managerial reforms depends on their ability to evolve into a context-sensitive, hybrid model that harmonizes global standards of competitiveness with the preservation of national academic traditions and intellectual independence.

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Тлемисов Ұ.Б., Оразғалиева А.К., Крамаренко А.И., Тлемисова Ж.М.

ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ ЖОҒАРЫ БІЛІМ БЕРУДЕГІ МЕНЕЖЕРИАЛИЗМ: ҚИЫНДЫҚТАР, МҮМКІНДІКТЕР ЖӘНЕ ӘСЕРІ

Аңдатпа

Мақалада жоғары білім беру саласындағы менеджериализм құбылысы және оның Қазақстан университеттерін басқару жүйесіне әсері талданады. Зерттеудің мақсаты – менеджерлік тәсілдерді енгізудің негізгі қиындықтарын, мүмкіндіктерін және салдарын анықтау. Зерттеу барысында халықаралық және ұлттық саясаттық құжаттар мен жоғары білім реформасына арналған ғылыми әдебиеттер негізінде салыстырмалы және аналитикалық әдістер қолданылды.

Зерттеу нәтижесінде менеджериализм университеттерді басқаруда елеулі өзгерістерге әкелгені анықталды, атап айтқанда, есептілік тетіктерінің күшеюі, оқыту мен зерттеу нәтижелерін бақылаудың артуы және нәтижеге бағытталған бағалау жүйелерінің енгізілуі. Бұл өзгерістер оқу орындарының тиімділігін, ашықтығын және бәсекеге қабілеттілігін арттыруға ықпал ететіні көрсетілді. Алайда, зерттеу бюрократизация, оқытушылардың әкімшілік жүктемесінің артуы және академиялық дербестіктің төмендеуі сияқты кері салдарды да айқындады.

Мақалада Қазақстанның жоғары білім беру жүйесінде менеджерлік қағидаттарды сәтті бейімдеу үшін нарықтық басқару тетіктері мен академиялық құндылықтар арасындағы теңгерімді сақтау қажеттігі негізделді. Ұлттық контексті ескере отырып, білім мен ғылым сапасының тұрақты дамуын қамтамасыз ету мақсатында менеджерлік реформаларды оңтайландыруға арналған тәжірибелік ұсынымдар берілді.

Тлемисов У.Б., Оразғалиева А.К., Крамаренко А.И., Тлемисова Ж.М.

**МЕНЕДЖЕРИАЛИЗМ В ВЫСШЕМ ОБРАЗОВАНИИ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ: ВЫЗОВЫ,
ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ И ВЛИЯНИЕ**

Аннотация

В статье анализируется феномен менеджериализма в сфере высшего образования и его возрастающее влияние на систему управления университетами Казахстана. Целью исследования является определение основных проблем, возможностей и последствий внедрения менеджериальных подходов в управление вузами Казахстана. В работе использованы сравнительно-аналитические методы, а также анализ международных и национальных нормативных документов и научной литературы по вопросам реформирования высшего образования.

В результате исследования выявлено, что менеджериализм привёл к существенным трансформациям в управлении университетами, включая усиление механизмов подотчётности, повышение контроля над результатами преподавания и исследований, а также внедрение систем оценки эффективности деятельности. Показано, что данные изменения способствуют росту институциональной эффективности, прозрачности и конкурентоспособности. Вместе с тем определены и негативные последствия, такие как бюрократизация, увеличение административной нагрузки на преподавателей и снижение академической автономии.

В статье обосновано, что успешная адаптация принципов менеджериализма в системе высшего образования Казахстана требует сохранения баланса между рыночными механизмами управления и академическими ценностями. Предложены практические рекомендации по оптимизации менеджериальных реформ с учётом национального контекста, направленные на обеспечение устойчивого развития качества образования и научных исследований.

