Higher education presents strong obstacles to students who serve dual roles in academia and employment. Students face persistent difficulties when they try to manage their academic responsibilities with their working responsibilities because it hurts their academic performance. All students do not experience standardized difficulties during their academic journey. Gender-diverse students who identify as either non-binary or transgender face specific obstacles which worsen their academic challenges. The study demonstrates that gender-diverse students experience minimal support from educational personnel and their peers thus leading them to feel more isolated with higher levels of burnout that result in academic disengagement. Academic performance research related to work-life balance exists but lacks thorough study concerning the harmonious relationship between gender identity and institutional support and student health. The analysis analyses the combined influence of gender-diverse students' hours at work and their available academic support frameworks on academic achievement alongside mental health development. The research identifies academic burnout factors to create targeted interventions for better gender-diverse student performance and well-being within university settings.

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Problem Statement:

The struggle to manage the demands of studying with working presents major problems for school students who worry about how their working hours impact their grades. Gender-diverse academic experiences facing non-binary as well as transgender students become even more complicated due to their unique struggles in educational settings. Gender-diverse students experience limited support from academic staff and peers because of which they tend to feel more isolated, and burnout happens more frequently. The current body of research about support system effects on gender-diverse student mental health remains incomplete. The research examines how work-life balance along with academic performance aligns with institutional support specifically studying its relation to gender variance so researchers can map out areas that will enhance student outcomes.

Research Questions:

1. At what point do work hours start negatively affecting academic performance?
2. Do non-binary and transgender students feel less supported by faculty and peers compared to their cisgender counterparts?
3. Is gender-diverse students more likely to experience academic burnout?
4. How does social engagement and institutional support influence the mental health outcomes of gender-diverse students?
5. Do female students feel less academically supported than male students?

Literature Review and Analysis

1. Work Hours and Academic Performance

The 2023 Xavier University investigation evaluated student performance levels alongside their time management abilities while working. Working students deal with dual difficulties including academic pressure together with minimal study time however experience two positive outcomes from developed time management abilities and academic progression. Students who work experience challenges when trying to manage their studies and work commitments according to this research which provides essential data about how working time affects student success.

Reference: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/386030924_The_Association_Between_Being_Working_Students_to_Academic_Performance_and_Time_Management_A_RESEARCH#:~:text=Between%20Being%20Working%20Students,Academic%20Performance%2C%20and%20Time>

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The research shows that high quantities of work hours reduce grades beyond a specific threshold. The combination of working up to 15-20 hours per week does not impact grades negatively yet students who work more than that threshold typically see their academic performance deteriorate. The findings support a specific limit which separates effective academic performance from inadequate academic achievement.

The collected data demonstrated that excessive work between 15-20 hours each week causes grades to decrease specifically among off-campus workers. The negative correlation between working on-campus has less impact on academic performance than the off-campus work setting may enable more flexible scheduling.

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2. The institution provides essential assistance for transgender along with non-binary students.

A 2022 research study established that gender-affirming educational policies help enhance both mental health and academic success of transgender and gender-diverse youth. The study demonstrates how institutional backing maintains a constructive academic atmosphere for students with diverse gender experiences.

Reference: https://www.srcd.org/research/gender-affirming-policies-support-transgender-and-gender-diverse-youths-health#:~:text=School%20policies%20that%20protect%2C,mental%20health%20and%20academic

Gender-diverse students have lower perceptions of faculty-peer support than cisgender students do. Such lack of support generates negative effects on gender-diverse students' academic progress.

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Students identifying as non-binary, transgender, agender, etc., show distinct patterns – notably even higher leisure (relaxation) time on average than cisgender students (male or female), coupled with lower reported feelings of institutional support or belonging​. This could signal that these students are less integrated into academic and campus social life, an important insight for improving inclusivity.

3. How does work hours affect the grades of students from STEM background to the ones from humanities background

Few research studies exist regarding academic burnout levels of gender-diverse students even though investigations into occupational burnout dimensions among healthcare professionals with sexual or gender minority backgrounds appeared in 2024. The study gives essential knowledge about the elevated pressure and burnout experienced by gender-diverse individuals during their academic life.

Reference: https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2826111#:~:text=2024%20%2D%20In%20this,and%20lack%20of%20professional

The mental health struggles of gender-diverse students include anxiety together with depression and PTSD which results in academic burnout.

The analysis demonstrates non-binary students, and transgender students face greater mental health problems than their cisgender counterparts thus causing them to experience more academic burnout.

**4. Social Engagement & Institutional Support: Impact on Mental Health for Gender-Diverse Students**

**Literature Review:** A 2022 study on faculty mental health emphasizes the role of institutional support in improving well-being among academic staff, which can be translated to understanding the mental health of gender-diverse students. Strong social engagement and institutional support are linked to better mental health outcomes.

**Reference:** [Faculty Mental Health and Institutional Support](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2405844023034448#:~:text=effect%20of%20gender%20and,social%20interaction%E2%80%9D%2C%20%E2%80%9Cgender%20%2B)

**Analysis:** **Context:** Strong social engagement and institutional support are critical factors in improving the mental health of gender-diverse students.

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**Results:** Gender-diverse students with higher levels of support and engagement report better mental health outcomes. However, those who lack support or feel isolated face significantly higher levels of anxiety and depression.

**Summary of Key Findings and Insights**

1. **Work Hours & Grades:** Working more than 15–20 hours per week negatively impacts grades, particularly for off-campus jobs. Students should be mindful of the tipping point beyond which academic performance declines.

**Actionable Insight:** Limit work hours to ensure academic success and offer more on-campus work opportunities that align with students' schedules.

1. **Support for Gender-Diverse Students:** Gender-diverse students report feeling less supported than cisgender students. This lack of support contributes to lower sense-of-belonging and academic challenges.

**Actionable Insight:** Institutions must implement inclusive policies and mentorship programs to improve support for gender-diverse students and foster a more inclusive academic environment.

1. **Gender-Diverse Students & Burnout:** Gender-diverse students face higher rates of mental health issues, which increase the risk of academic burnout.

**Actionable Insight:** Provide targeted mental health support, including services tailored to LGBTQ+ students, to help reduce burnout and improve academic outcomes.

1. **Social Engagement & Mental Health:** A sense of belonging and institutional support significantly improve mental health outcomes for gender-diverse students.

**Actionable Insight:** Strengthen campus programs that promote social engagement and create a more supportive environment for gender-diverse students.

By focusing on these key insights, universities can create a more supportive environment for all students, particularly gender-diverse individuals, and promote academic success while addressing mental health challenges.

This research has highlighted critical insights into the intersection of work-life balance, gender diversity, and academic performance. It is clear that gender-diverse students, particularly non-binary and transgender individuals, face unique challenges in higher education, including lower levels of perceived academic support and higher rates of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and burnout. Our findings suggest that while moderate work hours do not significantly harm academic performance, the tipping point for students, especially those working off-campus, occurs when work hours exceed 15–20 hours a week. Additionally, gender-diverse students feel less supported by faculty and peers, which negatively impacts their sense of belonging and mental health. To address these challenges, it is essential that institutions implement more inclusive policies, offer targeted mental health support, and create environments that promote social engagement and a sense of belonging for all students. This research calls for further exploration and actionable changes that can bridge the gap in support for gender-diverse students, ensuring that they thrive academically and personally in higher education. By focusing on work-life balance, inclusive support systems, and mental health resources, institutions can foster a more equitable and supportive academic environment for all students.