**Higher Education Support Services in the lens of Expectancy- Disconfirmation Theory**

**ABSTRACT**

This study evaluated the satisfaction levels of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) students at Davao Oriental State University–Cateel Campus regarding higher education support services through the lens of the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (EDT). The research focused on five critical support areas: Admission Services, Scholarship and Financial Assistance (SFA), Food Services, Health and Wellness Services, and Safety and Security Services. Using a descriptive-comparative quantitative design, data were gathered from officially enrolled BEED students for the Academic Year 2024–2025 through a researcher-made survey questionnaire. Findings revealed that student expectations were consistently high to very high, with the highest expectations observed in Health and Wellness (𝑥̄ = 4.39, SD = 0.63) and Safety and Security (𝑥̄ = 4.36, SD = 0.65). In contrast, perceived performance ratings across all services were lower but remained high (ranging from 𝑥̄ = 3.66 to 3.87). Paired samples t-tests showed significant differences between expectations and perceived performance in all five areas (p < 0.05), confirming the presence of negative disconfirmation. The greatest gaps were recorded in Health and Wellness ( = 0.52), Food Services ( = 0.50), and Safety and Security ( = 0.50), suggesting that these services did not fully meet student expectations. These disconfirmation results directly impacted satisfaction levels. The findings affirm EDT’s application in higher education, highlighting the need for institutions to enhance service delivery through timely, transparent, and student-centered practices. The study offers valuable insights for administrators seeking to improve institutional responsiveness and student satisfaction in support service provision.

**Keywords:** *Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, BEED Students, Support Services*

1. **INTRODUCTION**

In higher education, student support services—such as admissions, scholarships, food services, health and wellness programs, and campus safety—are essential to academic success, retention, and holistic student development (UNESCO, 2022; CHED, 2021). When these services meet students' expectations, they foster a more conducive and equitable learning environment (Garcia & Campos, 2020). Globally and locally, however, persistent challenges hinder these goals. Disparities in access to scholarships, inadequate mental health support, food insecurity, and campus safety issues continue to affect student outcomes (Xiao et al., 2020; Goldrick-Rab et al., 2018). In the Philippines, many students are unable to access sufficient financial aid or quality wellness services, with reports indicating unmet mental health needs and safety concerns in universities (CHED, 2021). In the Davao Region, limited financial assistance, unsatisfactory food services, and rising campus security incidents further highlight the need for service improvements (De la Cruz, 2021; Davao Police Office, 2021). Guided by the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (Oliver, 2015), this study examines the alignment between students’ expectations and their perceived experiences of higher education support services. The findings aim to provide evidence-based insights to help institutions enhance service delivery, promote student satisfaction, and improve institutional responsiveness. In an era that demands accountability and student-centered approaches, such analysis is vital for building inclusive, resilient, and socially responsive higher education systems (Jabbarov, 2021).

This study investigated the level of satisfaction among Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) students with the support services provided by their institution.

1. What is the level of BEED students’ expectation of the higher education support services to be provided by the following offices:
2. Admission Service;
3. Scholarship and Financial Aid Service;
4. Food Service;
5. Health and Wellness Service and
6. Safety and Security Service?
7. What is the level of BEED students’ perceived performance on the actual higher education support services provided by the following offices:
8. Admission Service;
9. Scholarship and Financial Aid Service;
10. Food Service;
11. Health and Wellness Service; and
12. Safety and Security Service?
13. Is there a significant difference in the level of expectation and level of actual performance as perceived by students for each of the following offices:
14. Admission Service;
15. Scholarship and Financial Aid Service;
16. Food Service;
17. Health and Wellness Service; and
18. Safety and Security Service?
19. In the lens of expectancy-disconfirmation theory, what is the disconfirmation-satisfaction of BEED students to the services provided by the following offices:
20. Admission Service;
21. Scholarship and Financial Aid;
22. Food Service;
23. Health and Wellness Service; and
24. Safety and Security Service?
25. **METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted at Davao Oriental State University–Cateel Campus, and the data were collected from Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) students from their first to fourth year who were officially enrolled in the institution during the academic year 2024–2025. BEED students were given a survey questionnaire to mark their level of agreement with the services through the lens of the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory. To gather data from the respondents who were officially enrolled in the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) program at the Davao Oriental State University – Cateel Campus (DORSU–CC) for the Academic Year 2024–2025, the researchers followed the procedure below:

1. Sought ethical clearance from the University Research Ethics Board.
2. Wrote a formal request letter to the School Administration Office to gain approval for conducting the survey.
3. Requested a list of BEED students from first year to fourth year for A.Y. 2024–2025 from the Davao Oriental State University – Cateel Campus Registrar.
4. Oriented the respondents about the nature and purpose of the study.
5. Distributed the survey questionnaire to BEED students and collected their responses regarding their level of agreement with the services through the lens of the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory.
6. Collected the data from the respondents and analyzed the results to determine their satisfaction levels
7. **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**The Level of Expectation on the Provided Support Services by the Different Offices**

Table 1 presents the students’ expectations regarding the admission services provided by the institution. The highest mean score was attributed to the expectation that staff should be prompt and professional during the admission process , followed closely by the expectation that the admission office should provide all necessary information The expectation for a clear and straightforward admission process also received a high rating Overall, the average mean of 4.28 indicates a “Very High” level of expectation among students concerning the efficiency, professionalism, and clarity of the admission services they receive.

Table 1. Level of expectation on admission service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect the admission process to be clear and straightforward. | 4.22 | 0.87 | Very high |
| 2. Expect staff to be prompt and professional during the admission process. | 4.33 | 0.92 | Very high |
| 3. Expect the admission office to provide all the necessary information about enrollment and other processes. | 4.30 | 0.90 | Very high |
| Average | 4.28 | 0.83 | Very high |

Table 2 shows that students have a very high expectation for fair evaluation of scholarship applications and a high expectation for quick disbursement of financial aid The overall level of expectation on scholarship and financial aid services is interpreted as high, with an average score of indicating that students place strong importance on fairness and efficiency in financial support services.

Table 2. Level of expectation on scholarship and financial aid

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect a fair and thorough evaluation of your scholarship applications. | 4.27 | 0.99 | Very high |
| 2. Expect quick disbursement of financial aid. | 3.95 | 0.91 | High |
| Average | 4.11 | 0.85 | High |

Table 3 presents the level of student expectations for food service on campus. The highest expectation was observed on the courtesy and efficiency of canteen staff , followed by expectations for a clean and well-maintained dining area and affordable food prices , all interpreted as very high. Meanwhile, the expectation for a variety of nutritious food options was rated high The overall mean indicates a very high level of expectation regarding campus food services.

Table 3. Level of expectation on food service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect the campus canteen to offer a variety of nutritious options. | 4.12 | 0.82 | High |
| 2. Expect food prices to be affordable. | 4.35 | 0.74 | Very High |
| 3. Expect the canteen staff to be courteous and efficient. | 4.43 | 0.73 | Very High |
| 4. Expect the dining area to be clean and well-maintained. | 4.39 | 0.79 | Very High |
| Average | 4.32 | 0.66 | Very High |

Table 4 shows students' expectations regarding health and wellness services. All indicators received very high ratings: approachable and professional health staff , access to basic health services , prompt response to medical emergencies and the regular offering of wellness programs The overall mean confirms a very high level of student expectations for health and wellness services.

Table 4. Level of expectation on health and wellness service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect access to basic health services on campus. | 4.40 | 0.76 | Very High |
| 2. Expect health staff to be approachable and professional. | 4.44 | 0.71 | Very High |
| 3. Expect wellness programs to be regularly offered. | 4.36 | 0.73 | Very High |
| 4. Expect prompt response to medical emergencies. | 4.37 | 0.69 | Very High |
| Average | 4.39 | 0.63 | Very High |

Table 5 presents students' expectations of safety and security services. Among the indicators, the highest mean was observed for the visibility and approachability of security personnel . In contrast, the lowest mean was recorded for adequate lighting in campus walkways and parking areas . The overall average expectation score was very high indicating strong student anticipation for comprehensive and reliable safety measures across the campus environment.

Table 5. Level of expectation on safety and security service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect the campus always to be well-secured. | 4.40 | 0.69 | Very High |
| 2. Expect security personnel to be visible and approachable. | 4.41 | 0.70 | Very High |
| 3. Expect safety protocols to be effectively implemented. | 4.39 | 0.72 | Very High |
| 4. Expect adequate lighting in campus walkways and parking areas. | 4.27 | 0.79 | Very High |
| Average | 4.36 | 0.65 | Very High |

**The level of Perceived Performance on the Provided Support Services by the Different Offices**

Table 6 presents the perceived performance of admission services. The highest-rated items were the provision of necessary enrollment information ( followed by the professionalism and promptness of the staff and the clarity of the admission process The overall mean score (x̄ = 3.87, s = 0.76) indicates a high level of perceived performance across all admission service indicators.

Table 6. Level of perceived performance in admission service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. The admission process was clear and straightforward. | 3.81 | 0.82 | High |
| 2. Admission staff were prompt and professional. | 3.88 | 0.84 | High |
| 3. The admission office provided all necessary enrollment information. | 3.92 | 0.82 | High |
| Average | 3.87 | 0.76 | High |

Table 7 shows the perceived performance of scholarship and financial aid services. A fair evaluation of scholarship applications received a slightly higher rating than the prompt disbursement of financial aid The overall average score indicates a high level of perceived performance in this service area.

Table 7. Level of perceived performance on scholarship and financial aid

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Scholarship applications were evaluated fairly | 3.66 | 1.07 | High |
| 2. Financial aid was disbursed promptly. | 3.65 | 0.94 | High |
| Average | 3.66 | 0.95 | High |

Table 8 presents the perceived performance of food service. The highest-rated indicator was staff courtesy and efficiency followed by cleanliness and maintenance of the dining area affordability of food prices and availability of nutritious food options The overall mean score reflects a high level of perceived performance in food services.

Table 8. Level of perceived performance in food service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Campus canteen offers a variety of nutritious options. | 3.71 | 0.92 | High |
| 2. Food prices at the canteen are affordable. | 3.77 | 0.86 | High |
| 3. Canteen staff are courteous and efficient. | 3.98 | 0.86 | High |
| 4. Dining area is clean and well-maintained. | 3.80 | 0.89 | High |
| Average | 3.82 | 0.76 | High |

Table 9 presents the perceived performance of health and wellness services. The highest-rated item was the professionalism and approachability of health staff while the lowest-rated was the regular offering of wellness programs . The overall mean score indicates a high level of perceived performance in health and wellness services.

Table 9. Level of perceived performance in health and wellness service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Basic health services are available on campus. | 3.88 | 0.86 | High |
| 2. Health staff are approachable and professional. | 3.96 | 0.84 | High |
| 3. Wellness programs are regularly offered. | 3.75 | 0.93 | High |
| 4. Medical emergencies are responded to promptly. | 3.87 | 0.84 | High |
| Average | 3.87 | 0.76 | High |

Table 10 presents the perceived performance of safety and security services. The highest-rated item was the visibility and approachability of security personnel while the lowest was the adequacy of lighting in walkways and parking areas The overall mean score indicates a high level of perceived performance in safety and security services.

Table 10. Level of perceived performance in safety and security service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. The campus is always well-secured. | 3.83 | 0.94 | High |
| 2. Security personnel are visible and approachable. | 3.98 | 0.84 | High |
| 3. Safety protocols are effectively implemented. | 3.93 | 0.85 | High |
| 4. Lighting in campus walkways and parking areas is adequate. | 3.72 | 0.92 | High |
| Average | 3.87 | 0.77 | high |

**Mean Comparison Between Expectation and Perceived Performance of the Support Services by the Different Offices**

Table 11 presents a paired samples t-test comparing students' expectations and perceived performance in admission services. The mean difference is 0.41 ( with a 95% confidence interval between 0.25 and 0.57. The t-value is 5.21 with 100 degrees of freedom, and the two-tailed p-value is 0.00, indicating a statistically significant difference between expectations and perceptions for admission services.

Table 11. Mean comparison between expectation and perceived performance of the support services provided by the admission office

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| Lower | Upper |
| Admission | 0.41 | 0.79 | 0.08 | 0.25 | 0.57 | 5.21 | 100 | 0.00 |

Table 12 presents the result of a paired samples t-test for scholarship and financial aid services. The mean difference between students’ expectations and their perceived performance is 0.45 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.25 to 0.65. The computed t-value is 4.47 with 100 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is 0.00. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant difference between expected and perceived performance in scholarship and financial aid services.

Table 12. Mean comparison between expectation and perceived performance of the support services provided by the financial aid office

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| Lower | Upper |
| Scholarship | 0.45 | 1.01 | 0.10 | 0.25 | 0.65 | 4.47 | 100 | 0.00 |

Table 13 presents the paired samples t-test comparing students’ expectations and perceived performance in food services. The mean difference is 0.50 with a 95% confidence interval from 0.35 to 0.65. The t-value is 6.70 with 100 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is 0.00. As the p-value is below 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant difference between the expected and actual performance of food services.

Table 13. Mean comparison between expectation and perceived performance of the support services provided by the food service

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| Lower | Upper |
| Food Services | 0.50 | 0.75 | 0.07 | 0.35 | 0.65 | 6.70 | 100 | 0.00 |

Table 14 presents the results of a paired samples t-test examining the differences between expected and perceived performance in health and wellness services. The mean difference is 0.52 with a 95% confidence interval from 0.38 to 0.66. The computed t-value is 7.35 with 100 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is 0.00. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this result indicates a statistically significant difference between student expectations and the perceived delivery of health and wellness services.

Table 14. Mean comparison between expectation and perceived performance of the support services provided by the health and wellness service

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| Lower | Upper |
| Health and Wellness | 0.52 | 0.71 | 0.07 | 0.38 | 0.66 | 7.35 | 100 | 0.00 |

Table 15 presents the result of the paired samples t-test assessing the difference between students’ expectations and perceived performance in safety and security services. The mean difference is 0.50 , with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.35 to 0.65. The calculated t-value is 6.69 with 100 degrees of freedom, and the p-value is 0.00. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this indicates a statistically significant difference between expectations and perceived safety and security service performance.

Table 15. Mean comparison between expectation and perceived performance of the support services provided by the safety and security service

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| Lower | Upper |
| Safety and Security | 0.50 | 0.75 | 0.07 | 0.35 | 0.65 | 6.69 | 100 | 0.00 |

**Disconfirmation-Satisfaction with the Provided Support Services by the Different Offices**

Table 16 presents the disconfirmation-satisfaction results for admission services. The highest disconfirmation was noted in staff promptness and professionalism followed by clarity of the admission process and completeness of enrollment information The overall mean disconfirmation of 0.41 suggests a consistent negative disconfirmation across all indicators, which, according to Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, translates to low satisfaction.

Table 16. Disconfirmation-satisfaction in admission service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect the admission process to be clear and straightforward. | 0.41 | 0.93 | Disconfirmation |
| 2. Expect staff to be prompt and professional during the admission process. | 0.45 | 0.85 | Disconfirmation |
| 3. Expect the admission office to provide all the necessary information about enrollment and other processes. | 0.36 | 0.87 | Disconfirmation |
| Average | 0.41 | 0.79 | Disconfirmation |

Table 17 presents the disconfirmation-satisfaction results for scholarship and financial aid services. The highest disconfirmation was noted in the evaluation of scholarship applications while the lowest was in the timeliness of financial aid disbursement The overall disconfirmation mean was 0.45, with a standard deviation of 1.01, indicating a consistent pattern of negative disconfirmation across both indicators.

Table 17. Disconfirmation-Satisfaction in scholarship and financial aid

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect a fair evaluation of scholarship applications. | 0.60 | 1.17 | Disconfirmation |
| 2. Expect quick disbursement of financial aid. | 0.30 | 1.10 | Disconfirmation |
| Average | 0.45 | 1.01 | Disconfirmation |

Table 18 presents the disconfirmation-satisfaction scores for campus food service. The highest disconfirmation was observed in the cleanliness and maintenance of the dining area while the lowest disconfirmation was recorded for the availability of nutritious food options The overall mean disconfirmation score was 0.50, with a standard deviation of 0.75. This result indicates that students experienced consistent negative disconfirmation across food service areas, suggesting that their expectations were not met, thereby leading to lower satisfaction with the food services provided.

Table 18. Disconfirmation-Satisfaction in food service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect the campus canteen to offer a variety of nutritious options. | 0.41 | 1.04 | Disconfirmation |
| 2. Expect food prices to be affordable. | 0.57 | 0.90 | Disconfirmation |
| 3. Expect the canteen staff to be courteous and efficient. | 0.45 | 0.82 | Disconfirmation |
| 4. Expect the dining area to be clean and well-maintained. | 0.58 | 0.95 | Disconfirmation |
| Average | 0.50 | 0.75 | Disconfirmation |

Table 19 shows that the highest disconfirmation was in the regular offering of wellness programs while the lowest was for the professionalism of health staff The overall mean disconfirmation score was 0.52 with a standard deviation of 0.71, indicating a consistent gap between student expectations and the actual delivery of health and wellness services. This result suggests lower levels of student satisfaction with these services.

Table 19. Disconfirmation-Satisfaction in health and wellness service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect access to basic health services on campus. | 0.51 | 0.87 | Disconfirmation |
| 2. Expect health staff to be approachable and professional. | 0.48 | 0.84 | Disconfirmation |
| 3. Expect wellness programs to be regularly offered. | 0.60 | 0.97 | Disconfirmation |
| 4. Expect prompt response to medical emergencies. | 0.50 | 0.86 | Disconfirmation |
| Average | 0.52 | 0.71 | Disconfirmation |

Table 20 presents the disconfirmation-satisfaction scores related to safety and security services. The highest disconfirmation was noted for the expectation that the campus should always be well-secured while the lowest was for the visibility and approachability of security personnel . The overall mean disconfirmation score was 0.50, with a standard deviation of 0.75. This result indicates a consistent shortfall in performance relative to student expectations across all safety and security indicators.

Table 20. Disconfirmation-Satisfaction in safety and security service

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
| 1. Expect the campus always to be well-secured. | 0.56 | 0.87 | Disconfirmation |
| 2. Expect security personnel to be visible and approachable. | 0.43 | 0.90 | Disconfirmation |
| 3. Expect safety protocols to be effectively implemented. | 0.46 | 0.91 | Disconfirmation |
| 4. Expect adequate lighting in campus walkways and parking areas. | 0.54 | 0.96 | Disconfirmation |
| Average | 0.50 | 0.75 | Disconfirmation |

1. **CONCLUSION**

The following are the conclusions drawn from the results of this study:

1. The study reveals that BEED students at DORSU–Cateel Campus held very high expectations across all support services. They anticipated clear, professional, and efficient admission processes; fair and timely financial aid; courteous and clean food services; accessible and responsive health care; and secure, well-maintained campus safety measures. These expectations reflect their strong demand for reliable and high-quality institutional support.
2. BEED students at DORSU–Cateel Campus perceived all five institutional support services to perform at a high level. Admission services were perceived as clear and professional; scholarship and financial aid were considered fair and timely, although they could still be improved. Food services were rated well in terms of staff courtesy, cleanliness, and affordability, but with lower satisfaction in food variety. Health and wellness services were valued for their staff's professionalism and responsiveness, while safety and security were perceived as effective due to the presence of visible personnel and established protocols. These results suggest the delivery of quality service yet highlight the need for ongoing improvements to meet student expectations fully.
3. Statistical analysis revealed a significant difference between the expectations of BEED students and their perceived performance of all five institutional support services. In admission, scholarship and financial aid, food, health and wellness, and safety and security, actual service delivery fell short of expectations. These consistent gaps underscore the need for institutional improvements to align services with student expectations better and enhance overall satisfaction.
4. Aligned with the Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory, the study found that BEED students at DORSU–Cateel Campus experienced consistent negative disconfirmation across all support services, leading to low satisfaction. Gaps were evident in staff performance, clarity of admission, fairness and timeliness in financial aid, cleanliness and variety of food in canteen services, access to wellness programs in health services, and campus safety measures. These findings confirm that unmet expectations lead to dissatisfaction and highlight the need for targeted improvements across all service areas.

The researcher recommends to address immediate issues such as food variety and campus lighting, quick-fix solutions may be implemented. Additionally, forming a student-staff task force to analyze feedback can ensure that the needs and suggestions of the student body guide service enhancements. By taking these proactive steps, the institution can effectively bridge the gap between expectations and experiences, ultimately fostering a more responsive and satisfying learning environment for all students.

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