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The important building blocks of newcomer immigrant students' education in the Norwegian context

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The education of immigrant students, particularly newcomers, must be considered from a holistic framework. The conceptual article aims to highlight other important aspects of newcomers' education, in addition to language and subject content learning. The three overlooked yet most important components of holistic education for newcomers are the following: (1) well-being pedagogy, (2) positive and comprehensive collaboration with newcomer parents, and (3) teachers' positive ideology of newcomers and their families. This article begins with a brief presentation of the issue in newcomers' education demonstrating an emphasis on some important yet overlooked elements in newcomer education. Consequently, in Norway, despite educational efforts aimed at supporting immigrant students, they continue to perform poorly compared with ethnic Norwegian students. Then, the paper defines what well-being pedagogy is and why well-being should be included in the comprehensive and successful schooling of newcomers. Here, well-being pedagogy is not limited to newcomer students' well-being; rather, it includes teachers (who work with newcomers) and newcomer parents' well-being. The why and how of comprehensive and successful collaboration with newcomer parents is discussed as a second important component. The third building block is teachers' positive ideology of newcomers and their parents. The paper establishes that the positive ideology and perceptions of newcomer students and their families are the core of the holistic education of immigrant students. This paper contributes to knowledge development for the education of newly arrived immigrant students by engaging in a discussion that can foster teacher motivation and commitment, resulting in greater support for newcomer students. Second, even though this paper is framed in the context of Norwegian society, the aim is to inspire the international community of educators and researchers committed to an equitable learning environment for immigrant students to consider the topic for further exploration. The article concludes with teachers' practice recommendations for schools and some directions for future research.

KEYWORDS

holistic education, newcomer immigrant students, well-being pedagogy, parent teacher collaboration, positive ideology of immigrant students, perceptions for teachers

Introduction

Today, as in many European societies, Norway faces mental health challenges, on the one hand, and promoting the integration of growing numbers of immigrant students, on the other hand. The history of minorities in Norway can be traced back to before the Second World War (WWII). There was a shared understanding that indigenous minorities (Sami) and national minorities such as Kvens and Romani people were linguistically and culturally inferior, and efforts were made to “Norwegianise” these groups (Engen, 2010; Phil, 2010). However, with the flux of immigration in the early 1970s, schools transformed to meet these multicultural contexts. Increased immigrant populations in the educational system demanded a shift from the needs and cultural and linguistic diversity of indigenous and national minorities to the integration of immigrants. The 2022 figures from Statistics Norway show that there are a total of 819,356 immigrants living in Norway. This corresponds to 18.9% of the total population (Statistics Norway, 2022). With the recent Ukrainian refugees, almost all municipalities in Norway have immigrants. These municipalities are responsible for providing equal educational opportunities for all children. In the face of the constantly increasing number of newcomer students in Norwegian schools, it is important to recognize the notion of holistic education for newcomers. In Norway, despite educational efforts aimed at supporting immigrant students, these students continue to perform poorly compared with ethnic Norwegian students (Rambøll, 2018). The results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that, in most Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, including Norway, even after controlling for socioeconomic background, there is a large difference between the academic performance of pupils with an immigrant background and native peers (OECD, 2018). One of the reasons is, as Rosnes and Rosslund (2018) state, “In Norway, the issue of diversity in education often focuses on second language learning and mother tongue teaching” (p. 274). Many have pointed out that host language learning is often prioritized (Phil, 2002; Øzerc, 2013; Dewilde and Kulbrandstad, 2016; Chinga-Ramirez, 2017; Hilt, 2017; Beiler, 2019; Burner and Carlsen, 2019). Holistic education for newcomer students includes more than language and subject content learning. Aspects other than host country language learning are relatively under-researched both nationally and internationally.

The notion of inclusive and personalized education for all students has been established in the Norwegian Education Act (Norwegian Education Act, 1998). The Education Act (sections 2.8 and 3.12) identifies Norwegian language learning as the most pressing need of newcomers. Consequently, the holistic needs of individual newcomers may not be fully recognized in reception classes (Norozi, 2019). Psychological and emotional support for newcomers is often nonexistent in Nordic countries (Nordic Welfare Center, 2018). In addition, the prevalence of mental health problems is high among immigrant students in Norway (de Pastoor, 2015; Bakken, 2016). de Pastoor (2015) mentions that a

lack of mental and emotional support in schools contributes to school dropout among immigrant students. In general, mental well-being is one of the most important factors that affect the academic and social development of students (Hamilton, 2013; Ekornes, 2017). These pieces of evidence urge us to consider immigrant students, particularly newcomers, education in a holistic manner.

The newcomers’ education is not only rhetoric and fine words in national and international documents: it is about the practices in schools at the classroom level. The present paper contributes to knowledge development for the holistic education of newly arrived immigrant students by engaging in discussions that can foster teacher motivation and commitment, resulting in greater support for newcomer students. Second, even though the current paper is framed in the context of Norwegian society, the purpose is to inspire the international community of educators and researchers, who are committed to equitable learning opportunities for immigrant students, to consider the topic for further exploration. In the current paper, I present the three overlooked yet important building blocks of newcomers’ education: well-being pedagogy, comprehensive collaboration with newcomer parents, and teachers’ positive ideology of newcomers and their families. These components should be read and considered in addition to language and content learning (the academic aspect). I begin with a brief introduction of newcomer students and how they are recognized in the Norwegian education system.

Newcomer students in the Norwegian education system

In Norway, newly arrived immigrant students often start their schooling in special classes called reception classes (Hilt, 2016; Skrefsrud, 2018; Norozi, 2019). For newcomer students, reception classes are the first contact with the host culture, school system, and socialization; Dewilde and Skrefsrud (2016) call these transition classes the “contact zones” for newcomer students. In reception classes, newcomers receive separate teaching that can last from 6 months to 2 years before transferring to mainstream classes (Ministry of Education and Training, 2017/2018). Because municipalities are responsible for schools, they have the power to decide on the organization of these reception classes. This has led to a plethora of local variations in organizational models. It is important to note that not all municipalities have chosen to have reception classes for newcomers. In the reception classes, newcomers are provided education in separate classes in selected local schools. This is the most common way of organizing education for newcomers (Rambøll, 2018; Skrefsrud, 2018). When newcomers master the Norwegian language “sufficiently” (a relatively vague term), both orally and in writing, they are transferred to mainstream classes. Newly arrived students represent a huge diversity not only in terms of their first language, but also in their country of origin, culture, schooling background, socialization, length of time in

Norway, and residence status. Additionally, every child is unique and has their own strengths and needs.

First component: Well-being pedagogy

In recent years, the concept of well-being has become ubiquitous in education parlance (Spratt, 2017). The WHO (2018) has positioned health as a synonym for well-being. The WHO constitution states that “health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” An important implication of this definition is that health is well-being, not just the absence of disease. Hence, what is well-being then? Ryan and Deci (2001, 2017) state that well-being is a complex construct and mention the two perspectives on well-being: hedonic and eudaimonic. Hedonism is defined in terms of happiness, pleasure attainment, and pain avoidance, and eudaimonism is the self-realization and full functioning of an individual. Although the meaning of well-being has not been adequately worked out and there is little consensus on the definition of well-being (Hooker et al., 2020), well-being theories generally agree that well-being is multidimensional, with the number of well-being dimensions ranging from 3 to 12 (Roscoe, 2009). These dimensions could include the physical, emotional, intellectual, psychological, social, environmental, cultural, financial, and spiritual dimensions (Adams et al., 2000; Roscoe, 2009; Linton et al., 2016; Hooker et al., 2020; Montoya and Summers, 2021; Biswas-Diener, 2022). The consistency that exists in describing the nature of well-being in most of the models and definitions presents two common threads. First, most authors base their definition on the WHO’s definition that well-being is not merely the absence of sickness and infirmity (Roscoe, 2009). Second, according to Roscoe, well-being is multidimensional in terms of the various factors that interact in a complex, integrated, and synergistic fashion. Each dimension is integral to the whole, and no one dimension operates independently.

Spratt (2017) believes that not all the dimensions of well-being are relevant to—or the focus of—school-based policies and practices. For example, issues of parents’ health or economic well-being may very well impact children’s lives, but they are beyond the influence of the school and, therefore, are not part of the discourse of well-being in school. Except for these themes, all others are relevant to education and schools.

The recent national and international official policy documents’ remarkable focus on well-being makes it essential in current research and practices. The official documents emphasize the importance of well-being for all children, so it is equally applicable to immigrant students, particularly newcomers. The WHO defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and can contribute to his or her community.” Since 1982, the WHO Regional Office for Europe, in collaboration with the Health Behavior in School-Aged Children (HBSC), has sought

insights into young people’s well-being and health behavior in 50 countries. The findings from HBSC studies have been used to inform governing powers and the field of practice to improve the lives of young people (Inchley et al., 2020). The findings from recent HBSC studies show that life satisfaction among young people has declined in most Nordic countries (Due et al., 2019; Inchley et al., 2020). A recent Nordic survey (Norway and Sweden) also reports that the global COVID-19 pandemic has led to a further decline in the quality of life among young people (Haugseth and Smeplass, 2021). When it comes to measuring well-being in education, the OECD has published details of its new Study on Social and Emotional Skills (SSES). The SSES survey represents a significant shift in focus to the noncognitive aspects of learning. The OECD’s social–emotional skills program emphasizes the psychometric science of “personality” measurement, which can be classified into five broad domains referred to as the “Big Five model.” As Hargreaves and Shirley (2021) mention about these measurements, if we act as if learning and achievement are the only things that matter, we fall into the trap of what Dutch professor Gert Biesta calls “learnification.” *Learnification* means that anything and everything must be justified in terms of its impact on academic learning. For example if one would want to secure more time for music at school, then they would have to point to the evidence that music raises mathematics achievement. Alongside learning, as we usually understand it, schools are also about how children develop. This refers to the development of human beings with good citizenship qualities. They are about how students experience and express awe, wonder, excitement, compassion, empathy, moral outrage at injustice, courage, playfulness, commitment, self-respect, self-confidence, and many other emotional and moral qualities in their education. Young people need to experience these things not only because of whom they will become *in the future*, but also because of who they are *now*.

The Norwegian Education Act (1998, p. 9A-2) is aligned with the WHO’s health definition, which emphasizes the “physical and psychological environment promoting health, well-being, and learning. In the recent Norwegian curriculum (LK20), well-being is presented as “Health and life skills” (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Training, 2020). The national curriculum is directed at well-being, with efforts being made to assess how schools can best contribute to students’ mental, social, physical, and emotional well-being. The discursive gap in the interpretation of policy by professionals is important to mention here. The execution of such policies cannot happen automatically. It asks for teachers’ ongoing professional support and includes such topics in teacher education programs. There is a need to explore how this emphasis is practiced in schools. Further, what needs to be done to make the theme happen in everyday school practices?

Why well-being pedagogy for newcomers

Well-being education captures so much about life from health to living well to personal responsibilities to happiness, so it is

worth asking how far one can take it with newcomers. Although well-being is a multidimensional phenomenon, studies describing well-being for children from a “composite perspective” are scarce (Moreira et al., 2015). There is a need for newcomers to have composite well-being with multiple dimensions that focus on these children’s strengths and create space for a more holistic field of well-being scholarship. In international research, schools have been emphasized as an important arena for learning and development for immigrant students but also as a *salutogenic arena* (de Pastoor, 2013), that is, arena that supports students’ well-being. The complex social process of immigration can cause psychological distress, which, in turn, may negatively affect newcomers’ mental and emotional health. In a systematic literature review of 36 studies about immigrant children’s mental health published between 2007 and 2013 in Europe, Kouider et al. (2014) affirm that “a migration status itself can often be postulated as a risk factor for children’s mental condition, in particular migration in the first generation” (p. 373). Several studies have investigated the mental health of newly arrived immigrant children in the European context (e.g., Hamilton, 2013; Margari et al., 2013; de Pastoor, 2015; Makarova and Briman, 2016; Karakulak et al., 2017). Margari et al. (2013) state that immigration as a physical and social stressor may lead to mental health problems in immigrant children. In the context of immigrant children in the United Kingdom, Hamilton (2013) examines some of the factors that may impact migrant children’s mental and emotional well-being and their learning. The study reveals the following:

[Newly arrived] migrant children’s anxieties as to be accustomed to a new language, academic rules, routines, buildings, and groups of people to function within their school environment...how individuals respond to such significant life events is dependent on inner strengths or vulnerabilities. (p. 174)

In their qualitative research review (2000–2013) across different countries, Makarova and Briman’s (2016) findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that, because of the “acculturation dilemma” (p. 11), minority children in many host countries’ educational systems face psychological and mental distress. Furthermore, teachers have been found to feel more positive about the inclusion of native children with physical disabilities compared with the inclusion of immigrant children with behavioral disorders, mostly because of their impact on other children. In a study with Turkish youth in Bulgaria, Karakulak et al. (2017) find that these youth have many challenges, including a high risk of dropout from school, disadvantaged social capital, low school grades and academic achievement, discrimination, and a less conducive school environment. In the face of this situation, there is a large body of research demonstrating positive correlations between student well-being and academic success (Wills et al., 2019). The inclusion of newcomers’ well-being at the policy and classroom level has emerged as an obvious need.

The “How” of well-being pedagogy for newcomers

Teachers play a vital role in the execution of well-being pedagogy. Teachers’ awareness of the importance of well-being and their motivation to make it part of their everyday practices are significant elements. Askill-Williams and Cefai (2014) report favorable attitudes among 1,029 Australian and Maltese teachers regarding their capabilities for mental health promotion in primary schools. This is not the case in Norway (Ekornes et al., 2013), where mental health is an unfamiliar term and often negatively loaded; however, significant differences have been found among schools. In this context, negatively loaded refers to a lack of sufficient knowledge and competencies that turns mental well-being support into an extra and time-consuming responsibility for teachers in their daily busy schedules. Ekornes (2017) reports that stress among K-12 teachers emerges chiefly from the tension between feeling responsible for and promoting students’ mental well-being.

As Cafai and Cavioni (2015) mention, the well-being of students is ideally attended to in everyday classroom practices rather than done or seen as an extra task. This is consistent with the notion of a positive teacher–student relationship (Sabol and Pianta, 2012; Drugli, 2013; Moen, 2016). Spratt (2016) calls this a “pedagogical relationship” through which teachers understand their students’ needs and help them learn. The formation of such relationships creates the basis for a safe and supportive environment for students (Scoffarm and Barnes, 2011; Norozi, 2019, 2020). The well-being programs in Australian schools, according to Vella-Broderick et al. (2022), include a focus on a range of topics, including acts of kindness, practicing compassion toward self and others, being mindful and savoring the positive experience, quality connection with others and self, empathy, keeping a gratitude journal, hope, best possible self, meaning and purpose in life, creativity, values, forgiveness, serving others (helping others), spotting strengths in others, healthy lifestyle (healthy eating, enough sleep, healthy hobbies, exercise, etc.), and making friends. Well-being interventions and activities can also include topics such as “best possible self,” “learning about different mindsets,” and “learning about full ranges of emotions.” Further, Broderick mentions some more well-being strategies, such as deep breathing, mindfulness, imagery, visualization, and emotion regulation. These activities are framed for all students and, thus, can be used for newcomers. The postmigrant phase demands that teachers adapt/reconstruct their pedagogies to accommodate the diverse needs (not only academic) of newcomers.

Norozi (2019) depicts many of the activities that have been connected to newcomers’ well-being, for example, therapeutic massage sessions, music, field trips, swimming, skiing, skating, and circle time. Some activities do not need any extra resources; only teachers’ competencies and motivation are required to make them a part of daily teaching. For example, one such activity is circle time. In circle time, each session is allocated to a specific topic to discuss, hence involving an emphasis on what makes students

happy and learning about the range of emotions and how to handle them in a positive manner. The teacher helped children learn and practice these approaches, consolidate, and implement in everyday situations what they have learned to enhance the well-being factor. In another study from Norway, [Klomsten and Uthus \(2020\)](#) report that students have benefited from the teaching of mental health as a school subject. The teaching of mental health as a subject was organized for 164 ninth-grade students for 25 weeks. In every 60-min session, the teachers addressed different topics, for example, how to be the master of one's life, self-esteem, and mastery and how to handle different emotions and difficult thoughts, anger, depression, stress, self-harming, and suicidal thoughts. The teaching of such topics included lectures, discussion, film, music, reflections, and exercise. The researchers claim that the students who attended mental health courses had a better understanding of themselves and others. It also helped students understand what happens in relationships between people.

Well-being of teachers who work with newcomers

Researchers have related students' well-being to teacher well-being ([Spilt et al., 2011](#); [Oberle and Schonert-Reichl, 2016](#); [Herman et al., 2018](#); [Harding et al., 2019](#); [Frenzel et al., 2021](#); [Panadero et al., 2022](#)). The well-being pedagogy is comprised of students and teachers' well-being. Students' well-being is not complete without teachers' well-being ([Noroz, 2020](#)). Even though teacher well-being in the workplace has been difficult to define, it has received increased attention in recent years ([Gearhart et al., 2022](#); [Panadero et al., 2022](#)). However, it is notable that teacher well-being has received relatively less attention than students' well-being. Teacher well-being can be understood through the analogy of being on a plane and putting on one's own oxygen mask before assisting others. Teacher well-being has a great impact on student achievement and well-being and vice versa ([Oberle and Schonert-Reichl, 2016](#); [Herman et al., 2018](#); [Panadero et al., 2022](#)). Teacher well-being is significant on its own, yet it is crucial for students' well-being and achievements ([Frenzel et al., 2021](#)). Teacher well-being is influenced largely by teacher-specific personal and internal factors such as perception and ideology ([Panadero et al., 2022](#)). According to [Skaalvik and Skaalvik \(2018\)](#), external contextual factors also negatively affect teacher well-being. Some external stressors that have been identified in teacher research include time pressure (workload), students' behavior, low student motivation, lack of administrative support, conflict with colleagues, role ambiguity, and student diversity. In the present paper, teacher well-being is reflected in terms of internal factors, such as ideology, and external factors, such as student diversity. Here, student diversity can be understood in different forms. However, in the present paper, the focus is on newcomer immigrant students' backgrounds, culture, ethnicity, origin, and language.

As in many countries, burnout is a growing problem among Norwegian teachers ([Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2018](#)). A reception teacher must work with a student who not only has a different lingual, social, and cultural background, but also cannot speak the language. This demands adaptation or, in some cases, the construction of pedagogies that are aligned with the needs and strengths of newcomers. For teachers working in culturally diverse classrooms, these challenges sometimes create difficulties that are attributed to a lack of knowledge, skill, and motivation to cope with cultural diversity ([Tatar and Horenczyk, 2003](#)). Efforts to increase teacher well-being often include stress management interventions, which typically involve individual or individual-organizational interventions. Informal stress interventions include self-care practices ([Gearhart et al., 2022](#)). In a whole-school approach project, [Lester et al. \(2020\)](#) confirm that prioritizing resources to build supportive staff relationships and an encouraging school climate while providing opportunities to promote teachers' emotional health have the greatest impact on teacher well-being.

Migration has contributed to the heterogeneity and diversity of classes, and teachers have been challenged when working with heterogeneous populations. Acculturative stressors may negatively affect the well-being of teachers working with a culturally diverse group of students ([Horenczyk and Tatar, 2002](#); [Tatar and Horenczyk, 2003](#); [Dubbeld et al., 2017](#)). To understand the negative impact of daily coping with culturally diverse students, [Tatar and Horenczyk \(2003\)](#) have put forward "diversity-related burnout" as a concept. Highlighting the knowledge and skills required to address matters of different races, religions, cultures, and languages in the classroom, [Tatar and Horenczyk \(2003\)](#) see diversity-related teacher burnout as a distinct construct from general burnout; they define it as a teacher's daily coping with a culturally heterogeneous group of students that has a negative impact on their well-being. Diversity-related burnout is different but intertwined with general burnout. The notion of diversity-related well-being pedagogy develops the aspect that students' well-being is interwoven with teachers' well-being ([Noroz and Ness, in press](#)). Teachers can consider students' well-being as an integral part of their work if only they themselves experience well-being ([Roffey, 2012](#); [Noroz and Ness, in press](#)).

The second component: Positive and comprehensive collaboration with newcomer parents

Migrant parents, particularly newcomer parents, often struggle with challenges related to the host country's language, culture, economy, and a new and different society. According to UNESCO, education for all aims to develop the student's personality, which includes respect for the language, parents, cultural identity, and values of one's own and other countries ([Child Convention, 1989](#), p. 29). There is a consensus in research that successful parent-teacher collaboration has a positive effect

on newcomer students' academic and cognitive development (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010; Short and Boyson, 2012; Calzada et al., 2015; Bajaj et al., 2017; Sibley and Brabeck, 2017; Bajaj and Suresh, 2018). Research also shows that parent-teacher collaboration has a positive effect on immigrant students' motivation, social competence, well-being, and the quality of teaching (Lea, 2012; Trzcinska-Krol, 2020). Successful parent-teacher collaboration also provides teachers with better insights into students' strengths and needs and a basis for adapting teaching to students' needs (Jenssen, 2012). Positive parent-teacher collaboration has a positive influence on students' academic achievements (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010; Nunez et al., 2015; Sibley and Brabeck, 2017), with increased thriving, well-being, and decreased behavioral problems (Fan and Chen, 2001; Faugstad and Jenssen 2019). When school becomes a safe and supportive place for newcomer parents and their children, newcomer students' trajectories can be significantly improved.

According to the Norwegian Education Act, § 1-1, parents are mainly responsible for children's upbringing at home, and schools are responsible for children's learning. Learning in schools needs to happen in close collaboration and understanding with parents (Education Act, 1998). The statutory guidelines can be understood as a minimum requirement, and the individual teacher and school can choose a more comprehensive collaboration. Although the official documents set some framework factors, the same requirements can be interpreted and perceived differently. Teachers and schools are responsible for collaboration, which is a prerequisite for creating a safe and equitable learning environment for newcomers. Parent-teacher collaboration finds its form in the astriction of different expectations, interpretations, and teachers' ability and competency to establish a comprehensive and successful parent-teacher collaboration. Teachers' abilities and competency are one of the most important factors in successful parental involvement (Westergård, 2013). Most teachers do not have the required competency to work with multicultural students and their parents (OECD, 2021). Bæck (2010) affirms insecurity among elementary and lower secondary Norwegian teachers regarding collaborating with parents. In another study, Bæck (2015) focuses on understanding teachers' points of view about parental involvement, highlighting that collaboration with parents can be difficult, demanding, and stressful for teachers. Faugstad and Jenssen (2019) point out that, to a large extent, Norwegian teachers rely on their own experiences in developing practices to collaborate with parents; they further mention that teachers receive little support from the education system and their schools. Parent-teacher conferences are largely characterized by formalities that seem to hinder genuine collaboration. Research (e.g., Westergård, 2013; Walker and Legg, 2018; Faugstad and Jenssen, 2019) has confirmed that teachers are ill-prepared for successful collaboration with parents.

Lea (2012) perceives Portuguese teachers' expectations and behavior toward immigrant parents as the main reason for "where cooperation does not function" (p. 112). According to Lea, teachers generally have the stereotypical idea that migrant parents

are dysfunctional. From the teachers' point of view, collaboration with newcomer parents is often difficult and stressful (Sibley and Brabeck, 2017). For example, most parents cannot speak the host country's language. Many newcomer parents have either no formal education or are less educated with limited marketable skills (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010; Sibley and Brabeck, 2017; Norozi, 2019). In addition, immigration tends to have a destabilizing effect on the family (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010; Norozi, 2019), and parents are confronted with the simultaneous tasks of adapting to a new land while still fulfilling traditionally expected familial roles.

Immigrant parents generally want their children to become well educated for future prosperity in a new society (Lea, 2012; Sibley and Brabeck, 2017). At the same time, immigrant parents, particularly newcomers, may be skeptical of some values in their host countries, especially regarding religion as part of their identity and culture (Barry, 2001; Vogt, 2016; Spernes, 2018). The process of acquiring and developing their own identity has many facets. Even in a majority culture, there is the tendency to reject some and include other influences. This dynamism, which we call "acculturation," is found in both national and minority cultures. However, a minority will always have identity challenges and less power than a majority (Cummins, 2001). Cummins calls this "a process of negotiating identities" (p. 653). This is an ongoing process for immigrant students and their families. It is important to acknowledge the culture, language, creativity, identity, and intellectual resources immigrant parents bring with them (Mena, 2011; Lea, 2012). Most newcomers' cultural norms and values emphasize family obligation, warmth and reciprocity, and strong connection with others, and this may act as a buffer against the negative effects of migration (Sibley and Brabeck, 2017). According to Sibley and Brabeck, most newcomers are more likely to live in two-parent households, which also has positive effects on children's education. However, teachers often do not recognize these positive effects.

Newcomer parents are often considered a challenge (Lea, 2012; Sibley and Brabeck, 2017). According to Bajaj and Suresh (2018), it is well known that many newcomer parents do not speak the host language. Realizing that newcomer parents might not understand all conversations, the teacher should involve them by being open and trying to understand what they think and experience about their children in the new context. The teacher must have openness and awareness of this aspect while collaborating with newcomer parents. This also demands that the teacher be well acquainted with immigrant students and their cultural backgrounds. Parent-teacher collaboration should be essential to every teacher's professional work (Bæck, 2015; Epstein, 2018). We must deepen our understanding of the processes that contributes to newcomer students' holistic education. As the landscape of our schools continues to change, the key role of teachers (particularly those who work with newcomers) in facilitating healthy and successful transitions for the immigrant population has become more pronounced.

Third component: Positive ideology about newcomers and their families

The positive ideology of newcomer students and their families is the foundation for successful equity programs and initiatives. As Gorski (2019) points out, even popular educational approaches can create a detour around equity because of a deficit in one's ideology. Gutentag et al. (2018) highlight that diversity does not lead to burnout of teachers *per se*; it depends on the teacher's perceptions and ideology. In particular, teachers' mindsets and perceptions of cultural diversity have close links with diversity-related burnout (Tatar and Horenczyk, 2003). Teachers are often unaware of their assumptions and beliefs of diversity and inclusivity to the extent that they consider this "common sense" (Dubbeld et al., 2019). The highest levels of diversity-related burnout were found in teachers categorized as assimilationists (Dubbeld et al., 2017, 2019). There are two major teacher positions—cultural pluralists and assimilationists—and may occur in combination in society, organizations, or groups. The pluralistic ideology is generally explained by metaphors such as "mosaic," "quilt," and "salad bowl" (Horenczyk and Tatar, 2002) to emphasize diversity. The pluralistic ideology assumes that the people of the host culture need to learn about and respect the migrant culture instead of having an exclusive focus on immigrants' integration. Furthermore, pluralism implies a need to adapt pedagogies according to the needs and strengths of immigrant students. Students with ethnic diversity are an asset to pluralists. Tatar and Horenczyk (2003) have found that pluralistic teachers who work in what they perceive as pluralistic settings show the lowest degree of diversity-related burnout.

"When in Rome, do as Romans do" is a common idiom that can explain the assimilationist ideology. Newcomers are expected to leave behind much of their cultural backgrounds and adapt to the host culture. The assimilationist believes that the school should socialize youth to become effective participants in the dominant culture. The teacher is the central agent in encouraging immigrant students to surrender their culture and traditions to become full participants in the host society. Immigrant students are also encouraged to learn the host language as quickly as possible. No major structural and pedagogical changes are considered necessary to help immigrant students, and the task of integrating newcomers is usually seen as marginal. However, in this case, it is agreed that teachers' knowledge about their profession is key to enhancing students' success. Importantly, as much as teachers need knowledge and skills, they also need positive perceptions of newcomers, which has an impact on teacher well-being (Panadero et al., 2022).

Teachers' personal views and beliefs on values and learning affect their practices and assessments of collaboration (Biesta et al., 2015). Teachers' perceptions of diversity, newcomer students, and their families guide their practices and attitudes. Teachers' positive attitudes toward families, their invitations to parents, and effective communication strategies contribute to successful collaboration (Willemse et al., 2016). If teachers are motivated and have a pluralistic ideology of diversity, then they will consider the newcomer

parents' resources (Horenczyk and Tatar, 2002; Tatar and Horenczyk, 2003; Cummins, 2014; Dubbeld et al., 2017; Norozi, 2019). Some research (Cummins, 1986; Mena, 2011; Lea, 2012) has shown that even illiterate parents can support their children's education. Regardless of family background and student achievement level, students do better in schools if their families are engaged in their education (Sheldon, 2019; Epstein and Boone, 2022).

Norozi and Moen (2022) find that the Norwegian reception teacher sees the positive in newcomer parents because this teacher has a pluralistic perception of newcomer students and their parents. For example, the teacher sees newcomer parents as extraordinarily strong (psychologically), and these strengths are conveyed to their children in ways that can positively affect newcomers' education through parent–teacher collaboration. Many immigrant families demonstrate considerable resilience, which can be defined as the capacity to survive physically and psychologically in premigration, transmigration, and postmigration (Hamilton and Moore, 2004) circumstances requiring strength and determination. Norozi and Moen's study shows that teachers appreciate newcomer parents' ability to adapt to a new lifestyle. Despite their challenges and limitations, the teacher can see newcomer parents' desire for their children to do well in school, which can be counted as a driving source behind the parents' flexibility and cooperation. Therefore, having a positive ideology of newcomers and their parents leads to better well-being for teachers and successful collaboration with parents. Both elements of teachers' better well-being and successful collaboration with newcomer parents have positive effects on newcomer students' education. Therefore, positive ideology and perceptions of newcomer students and their families should be at the core of the holistic education of immigrant students. Without having a positive ideology of newcomers and their families, equity programs and initiatives would be what Gorski (2019) calls a "deficit ideology detour" (p. 58).

Conclusion

The present conceptual paper is framed in the context of the Norwegian education system, yet the purpose has been to inspire the international community of educators and researchers who are committed to an equitable learning environment for immigrant students to consider the topic for further exploration. This signifies that the concepts, metaphors, theories, and implications can be applied in other contexts. Recognizing that newcomer students are a growing segment of Norwegian schools, the current paper emphasizes that the holistic education of newcomer students should be considered at all levels. In addition to language and subject content learning, three unheeded yet important components should be included in newcomers' education: well-being pedagogy, successful parental involvement, and teachers' positive perceptions of newcomers and their families. The present paper has stressed the need to consider well-being as a prerequisite for academic needs other than the Norwegian language and subject content learning in reception classes. The paper also discusses why well-being should

be included as a prerequisite for the comprehensive and successful schooling of newly arrived students. Further, the current paper has presented some practical ways in which well-being can be integrated for newcomers in everyday school practices. The policy documents recognize the importance of well-being for all students. However, classroom practices can always be improved. The second important component that has been discussed is a positive and comprehensive collaboration with newcomer parents. This type of collaboration will help in better understanding and meeting the needs of newcomer students. The third component is a positive ideology about newcomer students and their families. The present paper establishes that a positive ideology about newcomer students and their parents should be the starting point and core of all equity initiatives and programs. From the three perspectives embraced in the current paper, ongoing professional support is explicitly suggested for teachers who work with newcomer students. In this type of professional support and other teacher education programs, a determined effort should be made to include these components. Furthermore, in this form of professional support, deliberate efforts should be made to promote a positive understanding of newcomers by focusing on their strengths.

Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

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Author contributions

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

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Conflict of interest

The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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