Bring your whole self to work: boundary conditions of subjectivity in diversity and inclusion discourse on investment bank websites

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ORIGINAL PAPER

Bring Your Whole Self to Work: Boundary Conditions of Subjectivity in Diversity and Inclusion Discourse on Investment Bank Websites

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Abstract
This article critically examines the discourse of 'bring your whole self to work' within the diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) narratives of investment banks. While inclusion is often framed as essential for leveraging diversity, scholars argue that 'whole self' approaches risk individualising diversity and reinforcing systemic exclusions. Drawing on Foucault's concepts of biopower, technologies of the self, and governance, this study explores how inclusion operates as a mechanism of organisational power, shaping subjectivities through corporate DEI statements. Using discourse analysis of investment banks' websites, the article identifies three subjectivities constructed through 'whole self' discourse: the whole self as a driver of productivity, the whole self shaped by wellness and mindset, and the whole self oriented towards personal growth. By interrogating the boundary conditions of inclusion, the article highlights the ethical implications of DEI discourse, questioning how organisations define acceptable identities and reinforcing the need for structurally inclusive practices that move beyond surface-level commitments.

Keywords Diversity · Inclusion · Biopower · Corporate websites · Investment banking

Introduction

The discourse surrounding diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) in organisational contexts has increasingly converged on inclusion as the key solution to the perceived shortcomings of traditional diversity management strategies (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016; Nishii, 2013; Oswick & Noon, 2014, p. 214). Advocates of inclusion-based approaches propose inclusion as essential for unlocking the benefits of diversity (Ferdman & Deane, 2014) and that through fostering inclusion, individuals can fully participate and belong in organisations (Mor Barak et al., 1998; Nkomo, 2013). A critical aspect of inclusion is the recognition of individuals' uniqueness alongside their sense of belonging (Mor Barak, 2016; Shore et al., 2011). In contemporary organisational DEI discourse, this recognition is encapsulated in the popular phrase, "bring your whole self to work". This idea suggests that individuals should be able to express the full spectrum of their identities: their personal characteristics, experiences, and authentic selves, in the workplace. This is premised on a belief that by embracing the 'whole self', organisations can better leverage the economic benefits of diversity, while simultaneously fostering an environment where employees feel valued and supported.

However, critical management scholars have highlighted issues regarding the 'whole self' approach to inclusion where an emphasis on individual uniqueness can become individualising and identity blind (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995; Oswick & Noon, 2014; Robertson, 2006). Such approaches fail to account for systemic issues related to historical marginalisation and disadvantage, neglecting the social structures that continue to perpetuate inequality within organisations (Dobusch, 2014, 2021; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2011). Furthermore, scholars have pointed out that inclusion is inherently exclusionary. By its very nature, inclusion cannot exist without the creation of boundaries that demarcate who is included and who is excluded, often privileging certain identities over others (Adamson et al., 2021; Brewis, 2019). 'Whole self' approaches to inclusion tend to be conditional, wherein only those individuals whose uniqueness is seen as valuable, those who can conform to organisational norms or contribute to corporate goals, are truly welcomed (Ahmed, 2012; Tyler, 2019). This tension

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between celebrating individuality and adhering to organisational norms has led to growing debates about the ethics of difference, wherein scholars examine how organisations negotiate and manage 'otherness' within the workplace (Loacker & Weiskopf, 2024; Vachhani, 2020). However, despite these critiques, there remains a limited understanding of the actual conditions of inclusion, particularly with respect to the boundaries of acceptable subjectivities. In other words, what elements of the 'whole self' are deemed desirable or undesirable in organisational contexts.

This article advances current theorising by examining how subjectivities are constituted through the "bring your whole self to work" discourse, with a specific focus on the boundary conditions of inclusion. I draw on Foucault's (2007, 2008) concepts of biopower, technologies of the self, and governance; crucial in this context because it provides a theoretical framework for understanding how power operates not just through external, hierarchical structures, but also through subtle, internalised mechanisms that shape individual behaviour and subjectivities. The research draws on the diversity and inclusion statement on the webpages of investment banks. Previous research has explored the role of corporate websites in the communication of DEI values, often viewing them through the lens of employee branding (Kele & Cassell, 2023), cross-country comparisons (Jonsen et al., 2021), and impression management aimed at various stakeholders, including employees, shareholders, and the public (Pasztor, 2019; Windscheid et al., 2018). Corporate websites, offer an opportunity to extend our understanding of how organisations wish to represent DEI in their companies and position themselves to internal and external stakeholders (van Bommel et al., 2023).

This article specifically focuses on DEI statements within the websites of investment banks, which hold a critical role in global economic stability and societal wellbeing. As critical actors in shaping financial flows, investment strategies, and corporate governance, investment banks play a significant role in structuring access to opportunity and power at a societal level. The 2008 global financial crisis, precipitated by unethical financial practices and unethical leadership, underscored the need for meaningful change within the financial services sector (Knights & McCabe, 2015). In the aftermath of the crisis, regulatory frameworks, such as those mandating Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) reporting, have sought to address diversity and inclusion issues as part of a broader effort to promote ethical and responsible business practices (Clementino & Perkins, 2021). However, despite these regulatory efforts, diversity progress in the investment banking sector has been slow, and many organisations' DEI policies remain disconnected from the lived experiences of their employees (McCann, 2013; Pryce & Sealy, 2013). Scholars have argued that the gap between espoused DEI values and actual practices within investment banking often reflects broader issues of exclusion, tokenism, and a failure to address structural inequalities (Ashley & Empson, 2017; Prasad & Qureshi, 2017). Investment banking remains a domain marked by extreme forms of elitism, homogeneity, and symbolic inclusion (Ashley & Empson, 2017). This study's focus on investment banks is important given their roles in financial markets, economic systems, and societal wellbeing, making the ethical implications of their DEI policies far reaching. Examining how these institutions articulate DEI commitments in their public discourse is therefore socially relevant, not only because of their economic power, but because they represent a 'critical case' (Flyvbjerg, 2006) for understanding how inclusion is narrated, instrumentalised, or undermined in high-profile organisational settings. The ethical implications of these findings extend beyond the financial sector, raising questions about accountability, representation, and the performative nature of inclusion across elite organisational fields.

The article makes two contributions. First, it contributes to existing research which draws on Foucauldian perspectives of biopower within organisations (Fleming, 2014, 2022; Moisander et al., 2018; Munro, 2012), by articulating how inclusion discourse operates through biopower. The article's second contribution is to the ethics of difference literature (Loacker & Weiskopf, 2024; Vachhani, 2020) by tracing the subjectivities that are constituted through the whole self and specifically, what the whole self includes and excludes. The article proceeds by examining critical perspectives of inclusion and biopower, technologies and self, and governance as the theoretical framework. I then present the methodology and methods. In the empirical section, I present the three subjectivities positioned through whole self discourse: the whole self put to work for productivity, the whole self as constituted through wellness and mindset, and the whole self as striving towards personal growth. I show how these work in conjunction to put social subjectivity to work for economic gain.

Inclusion and 'Whole Self' Discourse

The evolving landscape of organisational diversity, equality, and inclusion discourse has shifted from a focus on 'diversity' towards 'inclusion' (Oswick & Noon, 2014). The organisational inclusion turn (van Eck et al., 2021), heralded inclusion as a solution to the lack of progress made through organisational efforts in diversity management (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016; Nishii, 2013; Oswick & Noon, 2014). While a contested term, a burgeoning body of inclusion research has focussed on two interrelated strands (Adamson et al., 2021). The first focuses on the degree to which the context or environment allows all to experience a sense of belonging (Ferdman & Deane, 2014; Shore et al., 2011). The second

element looks at the feelings or psychological state of the individual (Adamson et al., 2021; Mor Barak, 2015). In practice these two parts work together, and inclusion can be best considered a relational construction (Ozbilgin, 2009). Advocates of the inclusion approach argue that: diversity cannot operate without inclusion, that through inclusion all individuals are called to fully participate and belong in organisations (Mor Barak et al., 1998; Nkomo, 2013), and that inclusion is imperative to 'reap' the benefits of diversity (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

While not seeking to undermine the principle of inclusion, critical management scholars have highlighted several issues with the approach (Adamson et al., 2021). One tension being that organisational inclusion is predicated on a belief that individual uniqueness can be beneficial for organisational goals. Inclusion becomes conditional, where it is assumed that those that are included are 'adding something of value' (Tyler, 2019, p. 63). A person's social identity becomes part of their uniqueness and value is attributed to their ability to harness their unique individual characteristics to economically enhance the organisation (Dobusch et al., 2021). Balancing between how much someone wishes to be included, and how much they should assimilate or maintain their uniqueness without losing a sense of group membership, presents an 'inclusion paradox' (Ferdman, 2017). Rather than diversity approaches which focus on the social group characteristics, inclusion has a neoliberal agenda that centres on individualism and identifies personal traits as more important (Noon, 2007). It signals a wider political shift towards noninterventionist approaches characteristic of neoliberalism (Oswick & Noon, 2014). One consequence here is that, in emphasising inclusion, there is a shift towards adopting an identity-blind approach that focuses on the individual rather than the group (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995; Robertson, 2006). Focusing on the uniqueness of the individual over group identity fails to acknowledge inequalities, power differentials, and historic disadvantage and marginalisation (Dobusch, 2017, 2021; Dobusch et al., 2021; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2011; Tatli, 2011).

How inclusion's focus on individual uniqueness has become manifest within organisations is in driving a particular organisational trend towards a "bring your whole self" discourse; a phrase *du jour* in which companies extol the virtue of including one's authentic whole self. Authenticity is similar to uniqueness where 'employees are "allowed" to be different from each other' (van Eck et al., 2021, p. 292). The "bring your whole self" discourse operates as a form of diversity 'happy talk' (Bell & Hartmann, 2007) which celebrates the positive aspects of diversity but without context and recognition of societal and organisational structural problems. Those who were once written out corporations, such as working mothers, are now written back in through images on the websites, however, they are presented as agile workers able to successfully balance work and home life (Edgley et al., 2016). As Costea highlights 'economic performance has become dependent upon human subjects intensifying their contribution as whole selves at work' under a range of managerial discursive motifs such as 'empowerment', 'commitment', and 'self-development' (Costea et al., 2007, 2008).

One issue not addressed within organisational inclusion approaches that emphasise the 'whole self' is that, by its very nature, a condition of inclusion is that it is not possible without exclusion. As Dobusch (2014, p. 220) states, 'inclusion and exclusion are considered as constitutively related which means that every inclusion implies an exclusion and vice-versa (sic)'. Inclusion is conditional upon the individual having something of value to add, being able to conform to norms and making the right choices (Adamson et al., 2021; Tyler, 2019), what (Ahmed, 2012, p. 163) has referred to as 'consent[ing] to the terms of inclusion'. Whole self discourse is predicated on the uniqueness perspective of inclusion where bringing your authentic unique self to work will be welcome without boundaries or conditions of inclusion. However, scholarly research and evidence has shown that organisations are not neutral places, but that certain types of individuals are privileged over others as ideal workers (Acker, 2006). Commonly, 'white heterosexual middle class men' are the norm, devoid of diversity attributes, where others are cast as 'different and to be managed' (Ahonen et al., 2014, p. 274). Inclusion rhetoric may claim an identity-blindness where all are welcome, however, in diminishing group belonging and historical marginalisation, inclusion approaches may be complicit with existing power relations (Ahmed, 2012; Dobusch et al., 2021).

Whereas both critical and mainstream approaches to inclusion assume that inclusion is reached when exclusion no longer exists, the nuances of this assumption and the conditions of inclusion need to be explored (Bendl et al., 2024; Dobusch, 2021). Priola et al. (2018), for example, show how 'focusing on the whole person' is bound within normative principles. Their examination of the way sexuality is discussed in relation to inclusion recreated heteronormativity while creating hierarchies within lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals. 'Whole self' also worked to deny the potential for discrimination as inclusion becomes about the whole person regardless of their sexuality which was unimportant if it was a private matter. Others have highlighted the difficulty of bringing your whole self to work for Black employees where 'professionalism' is synonymous with whiteness and Black employees experience code-switching to de-emphasis their racial identity (Cain et al., 2023). Code-switching is a means in which people mask or adapt their language, dialect, mannerisms, or cultural signifiers to those of the dominant group to avoid discrimination, stereotyping, and bias (McCluney et al., 2021). While

code-switching is a protective strategy, it has been shown to be emotionally and physically exhausting and failure to code-switch can lead to negative evaluations by white colleagues (Cain et al., 2023; McCluney et al., 2021). Turning to employees who are neurodiverse, Dobusch (2021) highlights how inclusion approaches draw upon ableist assumptions casting autistic individuals as 'other' in relation to an ideal organisational subject who conforms to neurotypical norms. These studies demonstrate that inclusion efforts can implicitly exclude by holding diverse employees against unacknowledged norms of acceptability.

In summary, research has problematised the 'whole self' discourse for not just failing to challenge structural inequalities, hierarchies, and power relations but potentially reinforcing them. 'Whole self' discourse is predicated on the uniqueness perspective of inclusion where bringing your authentic unique self to work will be welcome. What remains underexplored are the boundary conditions of inclusion: which elements of the whole self are deemed acceptable within existing power structures, and how this discourse shapes organisational subjectivities. A critical examination of the 'whole self' discourse is needed to reveal how certain identities and expressions are legitimised while others are marginalised. In doing so, the article extends current understandings of inclusion and contributes to ongoing debates about the ethics of difference and otherness in organisational life (Loacker & Weiskopf, 2024).

Governance, Biopower, and Technologies of the Self

Inclusion signals a broader shift in managerialism within organisations and wider society where individuals are encouraged to think about work as a site of self-expression, to fulfil their potential, become empowered, and self-actualised economically rational subjects (Costea et al., 2007, 2008). This changing nature of work and employment relations can be seen as occurring within a broader rationality of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism can be understood as political rationality that extends beyond the economic to a form of governmentality, which constructs individuals as entrepreneurial subjects by propagating market value to social domains and actions (Brown, 2015; Foucault, 1988, 2008; Rose, 1999). This has implications for contemporary subjectivities, as it fosters modes of being within this economic framework (Foucault, 1979, 1988, 2008).

Following others who examine how subjectivities are constituted under neoliberalism (Carr & Kelan, 2023; Dean, 2009; Moisander et al., 2018), the article's theoretical perspective draws on Michel Foucault's later work on neoliberal governmentality and biopolitics (Foucault, 2008). In Foucault's (1979) early work, he conceptualised governance as enacted through disciplinary techniques and surveillance devices. In organisations, disciplinary control occurs through bureaucratic mechanisms such as performance management systems, policies, and procedures (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2004; de Vaujany et al., 2021). Within this Foucauldian framing of the way power operates with organisations, human resource management and diversity management could therefore be conceptualised as a form of disciplinary control. In Foucault's (2007, 2008) later writing, he moved away from seeing power as operating through an external logic of surveillance to governance through mechanisms of biopower. Biopower acts as a non-disciplinary power targeting all aspects of human existence through *bios* or 'life itself' (Foucault, 2008). This form of power does not control through disciplinary measures, but through harnessing all aspects of the biological and social subject to subtly manage and optimise the lives of populations. In managing populations, biopower produces norms and expectations for individuals that are expected to work on themselves as a form of human capital. Developing the right form of human capital requires positioning the self as a form of enterprise in which individuals frame their lives and subjectivities to become economically self-sufficient (McNay, 2009; Munro, 2012).

How individuals frame their lives and subjectivities to develop the right form of human capital is through 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1988). Technologies of self 'permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality' (Foucault, 1988, p. 18). The technologies of the self, then, are a mechanism through which individuals contribute to their own governance under the broader umbrella of biopower. Feminist scholars have examined how technologies of the self are gendered with women called to develop as entrepreneurs of the self through developing resilience (Gill & Orgad, 2018), confidence (Gill & Orgad, 2017), and positivity (Carr & Kelan, 2023). In this article, I extend theorising on inclusion discourse by examining how this constitutes certain subjectivities. The article advances our understanding of how inclusion operates as technologies of the self by constructing subjectivities in terms of who is included (and therefore of economic value) and who is excluded.

Methodology

The article addresses the question of how inclusion discourse operates as a technology of the self to constitute subjectivities. To do so, I draw on diversity and inclusion statements on web pages of investment bank. In the following

section I outline the data and 'field' setting exploring why websites are a useful site of organisational analysis and why investment banks were chosen. I then present the methods of analysis and particularly the approach to discourse analysis.

Research Setting

The aim of the paper was to examine the diversity and inclusion pages on corporate websites. While these feature on the websites of many corporations and multinational enterprises websites, investment banking was chosen as the sector of study. Investment banking plays a critical role at the heart of capitalism as an intermediary for capital allocation or redistribution from savers to producers via investments (Stowell, 2013). Investment banks present an interesting field of study as the role of ethics in finance has far reaching consequences for individuals, business, and economies (Boatright, 2010). The clearest example of the critical influence of investment banking within all aspects of society was in the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 (GFC) (Herzog, 2019). Macrolevel explanations for the cause of the GFC focussed on how deregulation had allowed neoliberal free market policies to run freely, leading to the subprime market triggering the GFC (Knights & McCabe, 2015; Welch, 2012). Indeed, the GFC was reported as a systemic failure of neoliberalism (Kotz, 2009; McCann, 2013). At the meso level, both scholarly and 'popular' attention fell upon the culture within investment banking (Mikes & Power, 2024). This prompted renewed interest in virtue ethics with a call for more integrity and accountability in financial leadership (Sison et al., 2019). In part, this focussed on masculinity as the issue, both in terms of the absence of women (Bongiovanni et al., 2023; Girardone et al., 2021) and the gendered culture of the banks (Griffin, 2013; North-Samardzic & Taksa, 2011). Indeed, it was argued within the popular press, that if Lehman's Bros had been Lehman's sisters, a GFC could have been averted (Nelson, 2013; Prügl, 2012). The proposition here being that injecting women, or indeed other 'outsider' groups, could dilute the risk-taking behaviours of senior leaders, which are characterised by recklessness, hubris, and arrogance (McCann, 2013).

The GFC highlighted and exposed systemic failures in the ethical practices of banks which prompted regulatory reforms. Today, the investment banking sector is both highly regulated and under high scrutiny from investors, with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals constituting one of the ways in which banks signal their sustainability and social responsibilities. Although as Paulet et al. (2015) highlight, while the banks may claim to be virtuous with initiatives to address social and environmental matters, these tend to be easy to implement and not expansive. ESG metrics can be manipulated, and the finance sector has been accused of 'greenwashing' (Montgomery et al., 2024). The same could be argued on the investment banks public commitment to DEI; all the banks selected for analysis here are members of the Women in Banking Charter, among other equality charter marks. However, the rate of change for equity has been slow, with the Financial Conduct Authority estimating that gender equality in banking and finance will not be achieved for another 88 years (FCA, 2021), women's representation on executive committees is low (Clempner & Moyniham, 2019), and this disparity is even more pronounced for black, Asian, and minority ethnics workers who hold fewer than 1 in 10 management jobs in financial services (Randstand, 2018). Indeed, investment banking has been criticised for employing elites (Ashley & Empson, 2017), where merit becomes defined by social capital rather than human capital privileging certain groups over others (Sealy, 2010) and work cultures that are hostile to women and minorities (North-Samardzic & Taksa, 2011; Prasad & Qureshi, 2017; Pryce & Sealy, 2013).

In sum, while investment banks may report their ESG and diversity data, have DEI departments and goals, and subscribe to charter marks such as Women in Banking, the industry has been highly criticised for failing to deliver on its commitments. As other have argued, there is more work to be done to determine the degree to which financial institutions such as investment banks drive social progress or their commitment to ESG, including diversity and inclusion are performative (Mettenheim & Butzbach, 2021). Considering the significance of banks within capital markets, the economy, and their ethical impact on reducing social inequalities through access to capital, they provide an interesting site of study for this research.

Materials and Methods

This article draws on the diversity and inclusions pages of the corporate websites of investment banks. Corporate websites are official company documents that are crafted to reflect the espoused values of the organisation (Bujaki et al., 2018, 2021). The recipients of these messages are both current and future employees, stakeholders, shareholders, and visitors (Jonsen et al., 2021). Corporate websites have been previously examined as sites of interest by critical diversity and management scholars. This existing research has challenged the degree to which employee images on websites are progressive or representative (Kele & Cassell, 2023; Pasztor, 2019), the discrepancy in rhetoric and reality when comparing corporate websites with actual business practices (Kele & Cassell, 2023), and as a way for organisations to gain credibility without tangible actions (Kele & Cassell, 2023). Analysing the images used on websites, it has been show that minority groups may be presented in equal amounts, however, they were portrayed in less senior

positions, more informal in dress, smiling youthful, energetic but 'other' or 'exceptional' (Bujaki et al., 2021) and in listening and supporting roles (Kyriacou, 2016). Diversity and inclusion on websites have been shown to be presented through an institutional logic of being in the best interest of the client and good for business but also as a feel-good celebration, a 'discursive motif' where difference is celebrated (Edgley et al., 2016). Others have referred to this as diversity 'happy talk' (Bell & Hartmann, 2007) celebrating the positive aspects of diversity but without context and recognition of societal and organisational structural problems. Indeed, diversity imagery and statements have been criticised for rhetoric, which is aimed at an external audience to acknowledge external societal pressure triggered by movements such as #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter but in ways that are not necessarily authentic (Burgess et al., 2021; Windscheid et al., 2018) and deliberately vague (Long et al., 2015). In summary, corporate websites can be viewed as a site to explore organisational discursive motifs in relation to inclusion. As such, they can provide insight into the type of subjectivities that are conferred through such images and how those who are seen as 'diverse' are brought into being.

This article draws on the websites of thirteen investment banks chosen because of their size and global reach. Eight were based in the USA, while the rest were headquartered in the UK and Europe (see Table 1). As these banks were mostly US and Northern European based, they potentially present discourses that pertain to a particular global contextual perspective and limited world view on DEI. The banks selected were global full-service banks, meaning that they provide banking services, advisory and a broad range of financial products serving mostly large corporations, governments, and institutional investors. Ten of the banks fell into this category and were chosen because they were in the top 15 by global size and therefore were most likely to have dedicated DEI teams and a DEI strategy. To provide wider representation, the remaining banks were from the middle market and boutique investment banks. While the DEI pages of their websites may not have been as extensive, they were still well developed and held similarities with those of larger firms. During data analysis, it was found that adding new banks to the sample was not leading to any significant new discursive formations, aligned with the concept of theoretical sampling (Hennink & Kaiser, 2019; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This discourse and data saturation at thirteen banks highlights the convergence, what Oswick and Noon (2014) refer to as a management 'fad', of DEI discourse around central themes, the current common sense being inclusion.

Analysis of the websites drew on two forms of data with data collection taking place in 2022. First, all the pages that presented the company's position on the DEI were selected. All the banks had dedicated pages for diversity and inclusion; however, DEI references were also situated on pages related to the company background, history, and culture and the career pages of the website. Therefore, the amount of information provided varied, with some banks having multiple pages in various locations and others having more contained statements. To extract the data, all the pages on the websites were manually read, exporting any references into NVivo that pertained to aspects related to diversity, equality, or inclusion. Employee testimonials provided the second form of data collected from the websites. Testimonials provided statements from employees on their experiences of joining and working in the firm, sometimes accompanied by their biographical data such as university degrees and place of study. Testimonials such as this can be treated as corporate branding materials in that they will be shaped and selected specifically for aligning with the organisation's image that the bank wants to portray (Windscheid

Table 1 Banks by type and country of origin

Banking type	Bank name	Country of origin	No. of words
Full service global investment banks	JP Morgan Chase	USA	2408
	Goldman Sachs	USA	8463
	BoA Securities	USA	7485
	Merrill Lynch	USA	1586
	Citigroup	USA	5255
	Deutsche Bank	Germany	4009
	Barclays	UK	8148
	RBC Capital Markets	Canada	4924
	Lazard	USA	1420
Financial conglomerates	ABN Amro	Dutch	3246
Boutique advisory and middle market investments	Roth MKM	USA	1044
	Schroders	British	1809
	Baird	USA	1548

et al., 2018). However, this does not mean they are not of interest as artefacts in themselves, and others have also used employee testimonials to research subjectivities (Sullivan & Delaney, 2017; Windscheid et al., 2018).

The theoretical framing draws on Foucauldian perspectives of biopower and subjectivity (Foucault, 2007, 2008) therefore I drew on discourse analysis which sees language as a means to conceptualise how subjectivities are constructed in and through power. The approach to discourse analysis adopted aligned with Potter and Wetherell (1987) who were influenced by Foucault and others. The data analysis involved first going through the materials coding into small units of content and then using NVivo to capture the codes, an approach typical of DA methods (Adamson & Kelan, 2019). Once all the information was pulled from the website, it amounted to over 53,000 words of text on the diversity and inclusion statements and an additional 18,000 words on the employee testimonials. The individual breakdown by bank is provided in Table 1. Data involved an iterative process, returning to earlier text as new codes were added. This process generated a large volume of codes, which were then read again and collated into first-order descriptive codes (van den Brink & Benschop, 2014). I then took an abductive approach in returning to the literature to consider how subjectivities were discursively constituted on the DEI data. In this article, I focus on three subject positions constituted through inclusion and whole self discourse.

In the following section, I present these three subject positions with 'power' quotes chosen to demonstrate the most common discursive construction (Pratt, 2008). In Table 2, I present the coding structure with illustrative 'proof' quotes (Pratt, 2008). While the data from the websites are in the public domain, the names of individuals who have supplied their testimonials have been changed to provide a degree of separation and anonymity from their original purpose to the focus of this article.

Constituting Subjectivities Through 'Whole Self' Inclusion Discourse

In the following section, I trace the boundaries of the subjectivities that are called into being through 'bring your whole self' discourse. The empirical material shows the whole self discourse puts our unique personal attributes to work for productivity, extending subjectivities beyond the workplace to develop the right embodied and affective practices, and on a journey of personal growth. Thereby, this section shows how contemporary inclusion discourse operates as a form of biopower.

The 'Whole Self' Subjectivity Put to Work for Productivity

The empirical analysis shows how inclusion discourse emphasising our uniqueness operates as a mechanism of biopower where diversity, individual difference, and 'life itself' is put to work for economic gain (Fleming, 2022; Foucault, 1988, 2008). Analysis of the websites supports the extant literature tracing inclusion as the contemporary common sense on DEI, signalling a move away from terms such as diversity and equality (Oswick & Noon, 2014). The phrase *du jour* used extensively across all the banks in various formats was to "bring your whole self to work". As Bank of America state:

> 'We are committed to maintaining a diverse workplace and an inclusive culture so that employees an bring their whole selves to work every day' (Bank of America).

Often these statements were linked to mutual gains: by bringing the whole self to work, individuals could be more productive and consequently the bank would benefit. This is illustrated in the statement below from Lazard:

> 'We are committed to sustaining an environment in which all employees – regardless of socioeconomic status, race, color, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities, veteran or military status – can bring their whole selves to work to maximize their individual potential and our collective success' (Lazard).

In statements such as these, all aspects of social subjectivity and diversity are put to work for 'collective success', where authenticity or the individual's uniqueness can be harnessed for collaboration and mutual gain. "Bringing your whole self" operates as a form of biopower, a conduct of conduct in which all aspects of our subjectivities are welcomed to enhance productivity. Often the banks talked about this in enthusiastic terms as a break from the past and as a new and enlightened way of operating where people are no longer constrained:

> 'ABN AMRO is a company where we encourage you to be yourself by offering everyone equal opportunities. Gone are the days when employees had to fit into a straitjacket…. Free to be who you are' (ABN Amro).

ABN Amro concedes that previously, employees were called upon to behave in certain restrictive ways—a strait jacket—but argues that now you can be yourself and in doing so, this will be rewarded with equal opportunities. The focus on being 'free to be who you are', or your 'authentic' self (also Goldman Sachs, Table 2), forms part of the intensification of subject's economic performance, where *all* aspects of

Table 2 Illustrative quotes and coding structure

First-order themes	Discursive construction of subjectivities	Illustrative quotes
Be yourself Express your identity Freedom to be you Safety Be authentic Inclusion This is Me Be your best	The 'whole self' put to work for productivity	• A culture of inclusion means we're all comfortable to contribute and be ourselves at work. (Citigroup) • We empower people to bring their authentic selves to work by maintaining an inclusive environment that welcomes diverse perspectives and encourages collaboration so that we can excel together. (Goldman Sachs) • "Diversity and inclusion is all about how to create the right work environment so that we can be our whole selves in the office. We need to constantly work towards bringing diverse thought and opinion to the table". Chief Financial Officer Group, United Kingdom (Bank of America) • Bringing your whole self to work—"It is part of who I am because I am a representative of my community that shares the blended culture. It is important that I bring my whole self to work because Asian/West Indian-Americans are very much a part of the community that Bank of America serves". (Brian—Bank of America) • 'Deutsche Bank employees are empowered to be who they are, unapologetically– every individual is encouraged to bring their whole personality to work. In today's open, global environment, demonstrating what you stand for is not just a nice bonus but a necessity'. (Deutsche Bank)
Health body and healthy mind High achievers in all aspects Life outside work Disability is no barrier to positivity Parenting	The 'whole self' as constituted through wellness and mindset	• I usually don't need an alarm**…** because I always wake up at around 5am. Even on days when I feel like lying in for a little longer, 6:30am is usually the latest I'll get up My morning routine… changed during lockdown but pre-COVID, my day would start with an hour of exercise, followed by a shower and breakfast in front of the BBC newsfeed. I'm an early bird so I like to be logged in and ready to work by 8am. During COVID, that routine went out of the window. But now that things are feeling more normal, I'm trying to get back to my healthy habits At lunchtime**,** I try to take my eyes off the laptop and read a novel while I eat to recharge my brain. Then, at the end of each day, I do another phase of planning for the following morning. This helps me prepare a draft plan with outstanding tasks and any follow-up tasks from the day. (Nesa, CitiBank) • One of the things I'm most proud of is that I actually do everything while being a single dad. I'm not saying that it isn't without challenges and that I'm not tired a lot of the time, but I have taken advantage of the firm's supportive and flexible working environment. I'm even fitting in training for my first half Ironman. Lavi (Goldman Sachs) • "What we're trying to do at Barclays is build a culture where it's fine to take care of yourself", says John. "We want it to be a safe environment, where there are diverse people, where it's okay to admit vulnerability. We all have stresses in our life, and we need a culture that is open to that [….] As we look to attract the best people, it's important that we're not only diverse from gender, sexual orientation and racial and ethnic perspectives, but that we welcome people with disabilities, whether in physical or mental health. If you have talent, we want you to know that Barclays is an open culture with accommodations for you, and where you don't have to hide who you are". John (white male US in 40's at Barclays)

Table 2 (continued)

First-order themes	Discursive construction of subjectivities	Illustrative quotes
Growth opportunities Learning Be open Growth Mindset Challenge	The 'whole self' as striving towards personal growth	• Barclays is very much an open learning environment. Everyone is keen to talk to me and tell me what they do. I've been out on lunches and client meetings so I've been doing lots of prep work for that. The first time I went out I was really nervous, but my line manager reminded me that the client was just going to be a normal person. I feel like I've made a lot of progress. I've become more confident. (Josie, Barclays) • "I'm passionate about women's issues and have been able to get involved with the Women's Network, where we have conversations about women in underrepresented areas of the bank. You get exposed to a wide range of people from different backgrounds". (Simi, Barclays) • "It was a rewarding experience walking into the office on the first day, knowing that this was the result of the hard work and effort that I had put in. I was really excited by that aspect of it. […] People will always tell you, 'Oh, that's hard. That's not worth your time.' But the only person who knows you is you. Just follow your heart". (Ravi, Barclays) • At the age of 15, Tim completed a work experience placement at a Deutsche Bank branch in southern Germany, where he discovered that the Bank gave him the freedom he wanted to achieve his professional and personal goals. Tim will soon have the chance to realise a long-held ambition of his, as he is moving to New York to continue his career at Deutsche Bank. "It was always my dream to live and work in New York at some point". This is proof of the possibilities we create for our people at Deutsche Bank—not only to make our employees feel accepted and appreciated at work, but in their lifelong ambitions too. (Tim, Deutsche) • Growing up in Malaysia, I was exposed to and engaged with individuals from a variety of cultures and worldviews. This type of collaboration taught me the importance of engaging with different viewpoints and perspectives, ultimately inspiring me to pursue a career in engineering that would allow me to become a problem solver and a collaborator. Advice I would give to engineers is to always be hungry for knowledge, and do not be afraid to try new things or to fail. Either way, it will be a learning experience. (Kim, Goldman Sachs)

the self are put to work as a discursive motif (Costea et al., 2007, 2008).

Similar discourse extolling the virtues of bringing personal aspects which traditionally would have been beyond the sphere of work such as lifestyle, sexuality, and political views, echo throughout the testimonials section, sometimes in evangelistic language. For example, in a testimonial from Matthew, a white gay man working at Deutsche Bank:

> 'Have you ever dreamed of working in an environment in which everyone is respected and recognised for their performance and capabilities, regardless of their nationality, sexual orientation, personality traits or the colour of their skin?' Matthew believes that this 'utopia' has become an everyday reality at Deutsche Bank – and he is doing his bit to enhance this culture' (Matthew, Deutsche Bank).

In the 'utopia' presented by Matthew, inequities are in the past. The subject as unique means that individual performance and capabilities create respect, *regardless* of your identity characteristics. In the empirical materials, the whole self discourse extends beyond diversity approaches focussed on protected characteristics to all aspects of the self. As Barclays state:

> 'Diversity, in the context of people and workplaces, brings to mind obvious elements such as ethnicity, age and gender. However, there's a lot more 'beneath the surface' that contributes to our diversity as individuals, such as our life experiences, political views,

sexuality, education, and the way we think' (Barclays).

Although it could be argued that extending our understanding of diversity to personality traits and political views is a marker of inclusion and belonging, people's lived experiences become trivialised. Systemic inequalities, such as race, become uncoupled from a history of colonialism and oppression, and the day-to-day lived experiences of black employees as they are held within the same sentences as someone's personality or political leanings. Thus, the whole self as a technology of governance means these experiences are blurred. Instead, a 'cruel optimism' (Berlant, 2011) prevails that your whole self will not just be warmly accepted but that bringing your whole authentic self to work is the route to economic success within investment banks. However, there are boundary conditions of inclusion, and which elements of the whole self are acceptable, which I explore next.

The 'Whole Self' as Constituted Through Wellness and Mindset

Analysing the websites shows how 'bring your whole self' discourse extended beyond the sphere of work as a mechanism of biopower to blur the boundaries of work and leisure. On the websites of the investment banks, flexible working, policies to support those with caring responsibilities, and a good work–life balance were promoted as levers to support inclusion. However, to achieve work–life balance, the individual was accountable for their own healthy practices of eating well, exercising, and engaging in mindfulness. In other words, time outside of working hours was consumed by practices of the self that focussed on the body to enable people to be more productive at work. This was evidenced throughout the employee testimonials where a focus on 'balance' constituted subjectivities through wellness as a technology of governance. Drew, a white male employee at Barclays, describes his day:

> 'My alarm goes off… at 7:30 am, mainly because I take a while to wake up in the morning!
> My morning routine… involves a morning walk if the weathers nice. I take a big pint of water with me and drink it on the way. I try to keep quite healthy and fit, so when I'm working a desk job, it's nice to get my steps in early.
> After work… I use the gym as a barrier between work and my personal life. It helps me relieve any pent-up energy. If I don't go for one day, I feel a bit lost in the evening. I also enjoy making healthy versions of fast-food favourites!' (Drew, Barclays)

For Drew, his working day is structured around good habits: walking, gym, drinking a pint of water, and healthy versions of fast food. Wellness practices are a prerequisite of the entrepreneurial self, a form of human capital that enables Drew to be a more productive worker. However, in testimonials such as Drew's, see also Neysa in Table 2, wellness practices construct the subject through a lens of able-normativity (Jammaers & Zanoni, 2021) and as unencumbered employees who can dedicate their time outside work to the self. There are no school runs, ageing parents, or failing bodies (Liu, 2022). The body is something to be worked upon, but it is sanitised within these descriptions as a performative site rather than as flesh (Harding et al., 2022).

Other testimonials represented a form of aspirational wellness that was well beyond the scope of most people. These were accompanied by photos of individuals in sportswear with toned and athletic bodies comparable to elite athletes. Lavi (see Table 1) discusses completing an Ironman[1] competition while managing the challenges of work and being a single parent. The photo shows Lavi at the completion of a triathlon swim, looking akin to images typical of a men's health magazine. Lavi is a gay single father, a subjectivity that is not commonly explored within corporate DEI discourse. He discusses the challenges of parenting and 'being tired a lot of the time', an honesty which is beyond the usual diversity 'happy talk' (Bell & Hartmann, 2007) observed. However, as an investment banker, he is not subject to the welfare shame attributed to the working class (Ringrose & Walkerdine, 2008). His aspirational wellness practices are positioned as central and linked to economic health (Miller & Rose, 2008). He is a gay single parent, but he represents an elite desirable subjectivity where privilege is conferred through his body, intellect, and wellness, a form of postfeminist masculinity (Rumens, 2017) where he can 'have it all'.

In another testimonial, Henry at Goldman Sachs, a black man in his early 40s, is photographed outside in a natural setting wearing sportswear. Like Lavi, he is toned, athletic, and 'aspirational' (Gill, 2008). The biography lists Henry's background as attending the US Naval Academy and then five years of service in armed forces before moving into financial services. He states:

> 'The key ingredient for success in private wealth advising—which may sound a little cliché—is grit. That's because you have to build your business from scratch, and no one is telling you how to do it. You have to define a process, be willing for that process to be fluid, and then have the grit to believe that if you

[1] Ironman is the term of a triathlon competition including 3.9 km open water swim, 180 km cycle ride followed by a marathon. It is known for being an extreme endurance race.

> follow the process, you will build a business' (Henry, Goldman Sachs).

Henry takes responsibility for his success or failure: 'No one is telling you how to do it' but equates his success to mindset through developing 'grit'. Grit can be conceptualised as a masculinised form of resilience, where affect is mobilised as a technology of the self. Subjects are called to develop the right mindset, all within an assemblage of therapeutic wellness discourse. Personal wellbeing is a project of the self that calls for bodily practices of healthy eating and healthy living, combined with affective practices. For Henry, this is grit, for others this was positivity. When employees with a disability were featured, their disability was minimised as something to be overcome with the right mindset. This is illustrated by Priya at Barclays:

> "People are so surprised that despite being a person with a disability, I'm always smiling," laughs Priya. "My online friends, my work friends – they all feel inspired by me."
> Although she lives with the effects of neuromuscular scoliosis – a sideways curving of the spine – Priya sees life as a series of opportunities. She loves dancing, socialising, travelling, and reading poetry as an open-mic artist, and she has no intention of letting her disability limit her horizons.
> Describing herself as "a specially abled girl who just happens to have impaired mobility," […] She also has clear career ambitions.

Priya's disability does not 'limit her horizons' or career ambitions and by smiling she surprises people with her positivity. A mindset of positivity means her physical disability holds little relevance and does not impact on others or the organisation. Bringing your whole self as a person with a disability and a single parent is acceptable when accompanied by the self-responsibilising wellness and mindset practices, which means your personal circumstances do not impact on the organisation. The idealised whole self, disciplined, healthy, productive, and positive, is bounded by norms of able-bodiedness, class, and affective conduct. Those with care responsibilities, chronic illness, or resistant political subjectivities are either marginalised or rendered invisible within this framework.

The 'Whole Self' as Striving Towards Personal Growth

The analysis of the websites shows how growth, development, and learning operated as mechanism of biopower in which individuals engaged in unpaid labour as a technique of empowerment (Moisander et al., 2018). While learning and development are intrinsic parts of any career and are critical to career success, learning is specifically targeted as a technology of the self (Adamson et al., 2023; Grey, 1994), as illustrated in the following example (also Ravi and Josie in Table 2):

> "My advice is to come in with an open mind and to focus on learning. I think it's important to really step back and think, 'How can I learn from these people who are willing to dedicate their time to me?' Ask as many questions as you can. No one is going to judge you if you ask an obvious one" (Isuru, Barclays).

The focus on learning as a technology of the self extended beyond business-as-usual activities to an additional task so that subjects were called to keep building their skill set as ways to future proof their human capital (Rottenberg, 2018). As Alex states:

> 'Then I look at the professional development side of my objectives – that is, completing tasks outside of my usual responsibilities to gain additional skills for the future. This might include enrolling in an online course, taking on a new side project or meeting up with other teams within the bank to find out what they do. The thing I love most about my job… is the freedom to get stuck into whatever I want' (Alex, Barclays).

In the previous example, Alex discussed his professional development objectives as side projects, networking and taking online learning as skills for the future. A feature of biopower is economic valorisation where unpaid labour is put to work (Fleming, 2014). Alex is working on his personal development to future proof himself and while he constructs himself as free to 'get stuck into whatever I want', these are tasks which capitalise on his efforts for the benefit of the bank. Through striving towards growth, individuals are constructed as the enterprising self in a project of continual becoming. In the competitive marketplace, individuals must continually work on themselves (Bröckling, 2005), future proofing themselves for self-reliance, self-responsible, and as flexible human capital (Du Gay, 1996).

In the testimonials, individuals' stories were commonly framed through a journey discourse, often overcoming personal adversity through resilience. In the following example, written as a letter to my childhood self, Samreen tells the following story of her childhood:

> Don't be disheartened by those teachers who tell you that 'people like you' can't do certain things. There will be other teachers who will believe in you […] A huge source of the inspiration and motivation that you need will be the example set by your mum. You've seen her show phenomenal bravery – escaping domestic abuse and restarting at a women's hostel to give you and your younger brother a better life. She'll

> work three jobs at a time; go without meals so that you can eat; experience stigma as a single parent; and face overt racism over the course of your childhood in 1980s Luton. But through all this, she'll maintain her faith, continuing to believe in a bigger sense of purpose. It's your mum who will instil in you your resilience and a strong work ethic (you'll take on one of your first jobs so you can slowly save up for a pair of Levi's!). She'll also cement your belief in the value of education and your passion for diversity and inclusion. You can lack confidence and often feel the weight of expectations both culturally and professionally […] Be brave, be courageous. Help others find their voice. Life will throw things at you, and you'll take them on.

Samreen's letter to her younger self exemplars the resilience discourse in which an individual's life experiences and hardships become developmental or part of their personal growth. The testimonial contains themes not commonly explored on the websites of investment banks: domestic abuse, racism, the stigma of a single parent struggling financially. In testimonials such as Samreen's, structural inequalities such as racism or domestic violence are foregrounded but subsequently subsumed into a resilience discourse that valorises individual strength over systemic change. For Samreen, these experiences are channelled into resilience and a strong work ethic which, if she can be brave, means she can help others find their voice. This reproduces a neoliberal motif of an empowered subject who overcomes adversity through personal effort rather than collective action.

Samreen discusses her passion for diversity and inclusion, and I observed how diversity and inclusion were often framed as part of a personal learning journey in which individuals' involvement in activities related to DEI was part of a personal growth learning project. Through involvement in the activities, one could acquire DEI knowledge of another's experiences. Whether you were required to do anything with this knowledge was left unsaid because the focus was on learning; action and activism were not discussed. For example, Thierry, a white French man, states:

> I'm a member of the firm's Hispanic and Latino Network which organizes a series called "Catch-up with a Colleague." This initiative matches colleagues randomly for a catch-up over coffee. I've met people from a variety of teams and make an effort to maintain these relationships. The chance to step away from the desk and meet someone whom you wouldn't interact with normally is refreshing. I've been surprised by how much I've learned. (Thierry, Goldman Sachs)

As Thierry's account illustrates (see also Simi in Table 2), DEI engagement is framed as a personal enrichment opportunity, he finds it 'refreshing', 'surprising', rather than as a site of structural intervention or political solidarity. Diversity becomes something to be consumed, experienced, and learned from, rather than confronted or challenged (Ahmed, 2012). How this translates to action, allyship, or challenging structural disadvantage is unclear, and the focus is on awareness rather than change.

In this section, I demonstrated that 'bring your whole self' inclusion discourse meant all aspects of social subjectivity were put to work for economic productivity. However, the whole self was bound within expectations that individuals worked on themselves through technologies of the self related to wellbeing and mindset.

Discussion

The article aims to explore the subjectivities that are constituted through contemporary organisational inclusion discourse and the boundary conditions of inclusion. In other words, which elements of the 'whole self' are acceptable within existing power relations and how does the whole self discourse constitute subjectivities. The three subjectivities presented are both interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The whole self as a driver of productivity harnesses authenticity and uniqueness for organisational gain. The whole self shaped by wellness and mindset, functions as an enabling condition, ensuring the emotional and physical regulation necessary for productivity. Finally, the whole self oriented towards personal growth sustains productivity through continuous self-optimisation. While these modes of subjectivity appear complementary, they also carry contradictions, masking governance through individual responsibility as empowerment and inclusion. Together, they work in conjunction to put social subjectivity to work for economic gain. This builds on research which critique mainstream approaches to organisational inclusion (Adamson et al., 2021; Dobusch, 2014, 2021; Dobusch et al., 2021; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2011; Tyler, 2019). By examining inclusion, and how the 'whole self' discourse is manifest within organisational DEI statements on the corporate websites of investment bank, I show how whole self inclusion discourse operates as a form of biopower to construct certain types of subjectivities, which challenges mainstream inclusions assertion that all aspects of us, our uniqueness, is always welcome within organisations.

The first contribution the article makes is to existing research which draws on Foucauldian perspectives of biopower within organisations (Fleming, 2014, 2022; Moisander et al., 2018; Munro, 2012), by articulating how inclusion discourse operates through biopower. Existing theorising has demonstrated how managerialism uses a lifestyle approach to increase engagement through bringing all of yourself to work (Kuhn, 2006), often under the guise of empowerment (Costea et al., 2008) and authenticity (van

Eck et al., 2021). In this study, inclusion, expressed as bringing your whole self to work, operated of a mechanism of biopower. All aspects of *bios* or 'life itself' (Foucault, 2008): our personal attributes, diversity characteristics, and lifestyle choices, were absorbed into work and framed as benefiting both the individual and the bank through increasing productivity. The whole self is brought into being by individuals working on their bodies through wellness practices and working on their mindset by being positive and continuously striving towards personal growth. The whole self as constituted through wellness and mindset and as striving towards personal growth thereby can be conceived as technologies of the self which contribute towards inclusion as a form of biopower. I thereby extend theorising to show how through whole self discourse, elements of our individual uniqueness or social subjectivity were put to work for economic productivity.

The article's second contribution is in tracing the types of subjectivity that are constituted through the whole self as a form of biopower. Specifically, what the whole self includes and excludes. I extend theorising on critical perspectives of mainstream organisational inclusion discourse (Ahmed, 2012; Dobusch, 2021; Ferdman, 2017) and ethics of difference (Loacker & Weiskopf, 2024; Vachhani, 2020) in which inclusion is conditional upon the individual as having something to add, conform to norms, and make the right choices (Adamson et al., 2021; Tyler, 2019). In the findings, subjects commonly unexplored within corporate DEI such as gay single parents, domestic violence, and social economic disadvantage were referenced within the testimonials. While it can be argued that such topics move beyond 'diversity happy talk' (Bell & Hartmann, 2007; Edgley et al., 2016), and elements of the whole self typically excluded from organisational DEI discourse are included, I show how inclusion becomes contingent upon the subject working on themselves through certain technologies of self. A gay single father is accepted if he maintains healthy practices to overcome the infallibility of the body and is an elite athlete. Employees with disabilities are welcome if they are smiling and an inspiration to others. Women who have experienced domestic violence within their families are welcome if they channel these experiences into a passion for helping others. The condition of inclusion is that individuals are held responsible for developing the right type of 'whole self' subjectivity. The whole self is brought into being by working on their bodies through wellness practices and working on their mindset by being positive and continuously striving towards personal growth. Mainstream approaches to organisational inclusion assume all aspects of the unique self are within the boundaries of inclusion. However, consent to the terms of inclusion (Ahmed, 2012) means that a subject's attributes must not impact others, the organisation or our own productivity and they are held responsible for making sure that this happens. The article has shown that mainstream inclusion discourse operates as a form of biopower which constructs certain subjectivities in which individuals are held responsible for their own conditions of inclusion.

At this point, I acknowledge limitations of the study which draws on data from corporate websites. The websites contained stories and references of domestic violence, hardships, racism, and disability. Although these stories were sanitised and repackaged as opportunities to develop resilience or grit that could then be channelled into productivity, they draw on narratives beyond what is commonly expressed within such an 'elite' organisational setting. While analysing the websites provides opportunities to unfold subjectivities constituted through including the 'whole self', it does not tell us what the banks seek to achieve and what motivates this. In presenting such narratives, perhaps the investment banks are seeking to present themselves as 'inclusive' and diverse. However, in the stories of hardship, the solution was for the individual to repackage themselves as appropriate human capital rather than on accommodations made by the organisation. Inclusion becomes therefore about the self, or more accurately, developing technologies of self that will be welcomed. Those who could not repackage their hardships to work for economic gain become the unspoken and excluded.

Further research could examine how organisations can make significant changes to structural inequalities when the messages they send about DEI are so individualising? Future research could also extend this study beyond the context of investment banking, which is an elite profession. Extending the research to contexts where there is greater representation of minority groups or different industry sectors, such as the public sector, creative industries, and health care sector, could illustrate whether this form of neoliberal diversity speak and representation has become mainstream. This study drew on the context of investment banking banks that where headquarters in North America and Northern Europe therefore reflect a specific globally situated form of DEI. There is value in extending this to banks in other parts of the world, the global south, and ones that have diverse customers including microfinance to understand how discourse varies in other contexts. The aim of the paper was also to use corporate websites, recognising that websites are constructed and created as part of a corporate brand. It was not to claim truth of the types of subjectivities that exist within the bank or if people identify with them. Therefore, further research could involve interviews with those working within investment banking to determine whether they identify or recognise the type of subjectivities that this paper has articulated through the analysis of the websites.

Conclusion

The article showed that the whole self operates as a form of biopower where all of a person's social and biological subjectivity is put to work for economic gain. This occurs through technologies of self which, through mindset, wellness, and personal growth, hold individuals responsible for maintaining the boundaries of acceptable whole self subjectivity. While this article has traced how inclusion discourse constitutes subjectivities aligned with productivity, wellness, and self-development, it is crucial to problematise the concrete consequences of such subjectivation. These discursive ideals privilege certain forms of embodiment; healthy, energetic, self-managing, resilient, while marginalising those whose lives are shaped by structural constraints or embodied vulnerabilities, such as chronic illness, care responsibilities, or racialised disadvantage. As a result, whole self discourse risks reinforcing exclusion in the name of inclusion, rewarding only those whose subjectivities can be aligned with organisational goals. This raises questions about who is really invited to belong and on what terms in organisations that appear to celebrate difference, while in practice narrowing the range of acceptable ways of being. As such, this study carries important ethical implications, particularly in how inclusion is framed within organisations. If inclusion is defined by conformity to corporate norms, it risks marginalising those whose identities do not fit the ideal. When DEI initiatives focus too heavily on 'fit' and 'value', they may exclude individuals perceived as non-conforming. This raises ethical concerns about the authenticity of corporate DEI efforts and whether they perpetuate or challenge inequality.

The article draws on data collected prior to a period of growing political and societal resistance to DEI initiatives. Recent developments in both political and corporate spheres signal a broader pattern of retrenchment, wherein commitments to DEI are being re-evaluated, deprioritised, or withdrawn. Such movements underscore the importance of critically tracing the discursive constructions of DEI within organisational contexts and examining how these narratives are mobilised, transformed, or resisted over time. The discourse of 'bring your whole self' to work encourages individuals to construct subjectivities aligned with institutional norms. However, it functions to depoliticise difference, obscuring systemic inequalities such as racism, sexism, ableism, and heteronormativity. Within this framing, difference is rendered apolitical, and inclusion becomes a matter of individual adaptation rather than systemic transformation. As the contours of DEI continue to be redrawn, it is imperative to examine how organisational discourses constitute subjects and legitimise exclusions, raising fundamental ethical questions about the conditions under which inclusion is made possible.

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Research Involving Human and Animals Rights The article did not involve research with human participants and/or animals as the data were drawn solely from corporate websites, sources which are in the public domain.

Ethical Approval As the article draws on websites, informed consent and ethical approval are not applicable.

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