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Family Demands Diversity, Team Work–Family Conflict, and Team Effort: A Moderated Mediation Model

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ABSTRACT

Most research on family demands has been conducted at the individual level, showing that they can negatively influence employees' abilities to manage the work-family interface. We challenge this existing paradigm by arguing that at the team level, family demands diversity (i.e., differences among members of the same team with respect to their family demands) can enable the entire team to better manage the work-family interface. Drawing on the categorization-elaboration model and social exchange theory, we found that family demands diversity was indirectly and positively related to team effort through team backup behavior and team work-to-family conflict, and these effects were stronger when team family identity was low and supervisor family support was high. We discuss the theoretical implications of our findings and the practical implications for HR policies and practices.

1 | Introduction

Many employees are under pressure to deliver high performance at work; these pressures are likely to be particularly challenging for employees who are also managing family demands. Family demands encompass various family-related responsibilities that necessitate continuous physical and/or mental effort, often leading to physiological and psychological strain (cf. Bakker and Demerouti 2017). A large body of research has shown that if not managed effectively, family demands can have a significant impact on employees' work and personal outcomes (e.g., Kramer and Chung 2015). As human resource (HR) professionals are responsible for organizational performance and employee well-being, understanding the implications of family demands is crucial.

The challenge of dealing with family demands is compounded by the extensive use of teams in modern organizations. Unlike employees who work independently, those in interdependent teams may influence or be influenced by their teammates. Research has shown that the level of family demands is associated with negative effects at both the individual and the team levels (Frone et al. 1997; ten Brummelhuis et al. 2012). Although these findings suggest that the negative effects of family demands may be isomorphic across levels, this conclusion fails to account for potential variation in family demands among team members (Yang et al. 2000). For example, in a team with varied family demands, some members may have substantial caregiving responsibilities, such as attending to children's needs or supporting aging parents, while others may have minimal such obligations. Given that
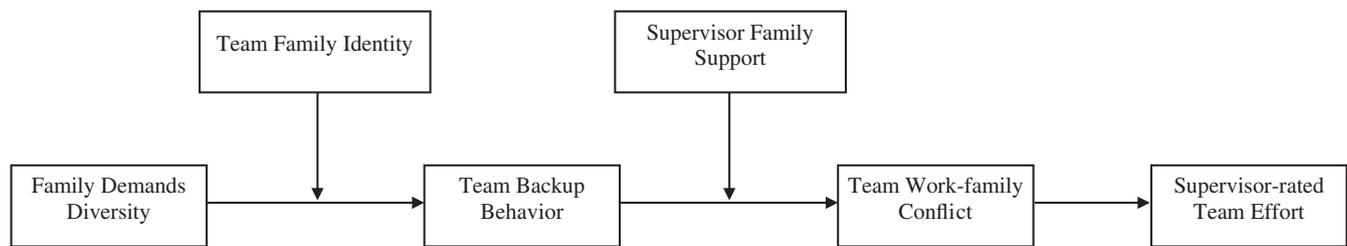
FIGURE 1 | Conceptual model.

differences among team members can result in psychological distance, misunderstanding, and conflict (Mesmer-Magnus and Visweswaran 2009), it is possible that greater family demands diversity (i.e., differences among members of the same team with respect to their family demands) may negatively impact team outcomes (e.g., Shore et al. 2009). Contrary to this assumption, we argue that, under the right conditions, greater family demands diversity can enhance team functioning by facilitating the exchange of both cognitive and relational resources.

Our theoretical arguments build on and extend the categorization-elaboration model (CEM; van Knippenberg et al. 2004), one of the key theories in diversity research. CEM argues that individuals who are different from one another bring unique cognitive resources to a team, thereby enhancing a team's ability to engage in problem-solving and creative activities. We extend the CEM by integrating it with social exchange theory, which highlights the role of reciprocal interpersonal exchange in fostering cooperative behavior. Specifically, we argue that relational resources—such as time and effort spent assisting team members—serve as critical facilitators of team effectiveness (Blau 1964). These two theories complement each other by providing a more holistic perspective on the types of resources exchanged within diverse teams. Importantly, resources exchanged among individuals can be categorized along two dimensions: particularism and concreteness (Foa and Foa 1980). Particularism refers to the extent to which a resource has universal or personal relevance, whereas concreteness refers to the extent to which a resource is tangible or intangible. Unlike cognitive resources that tend to be low on particularism and concreteness, relational resources tend to be high on particularism and concreteness because they are often used to benefit a target person (high on particularism) and can produce tangible outcomes for the exchange beneficiaries similar to goods and services (high on concreteness) (Foa and Foa 1980).

Building on these arguments, we propose that under the right conditions, family demands diversity in a team not only creates opportunities for the exchange of cognitive resources such as diverse experiences, knowledge, and insights but also promotes the sharing of relational resources. Specifically, we identify team family identity (the extent to which team members, on average, value their family role and use this role for self-definition, Greenhaus and Powell 2003) as relevant to unlocking the potential of family demands diversity within teams. We argue that when team members have low family identity, family demands diversity enhances the likelihood of team backup behavior ("the discretionary provision of resources and task related effort to another member of one's team that is intended to help that team

member," Porter et al. 2003, 391–392) because of the opportunities to exchange both cognitive and relational resources.

Team backup behavior facilitates the flow of resources among team members with different levels of family demands, which reduces team work-to-family conflict (team WFC), or the shared perception that team members' work duties negatively interfere with the family role (Moen et al. 2015). Due to the role of a leader as a resource distributor (Salas et al. 2005) and also as a gatekeeper that protects employees from backlash for investing in their family role (Kossek et al. 2021), we predict that supervisor family support (the extent to which a supervisor cares about subordinates' family needs, Kossek et al. 2011) moderates the relationship between team backup behavior and team WFC. Team WFC, in turn, impacts the extent to which team members exert effort for the team. These predictions result in a moderated mediation model, whereby the indirect effect of family demands diversity on team effort through team backup behavior and team WFC is moderated by team family identity and supervisor family support, such that the effect is more positive when team family identity is low and supervisor family support is high (see Figure 1). We test our model using a multi-wave, multi-source design with 108 field teams.

Our work makes three important contributions to the literature. First, our study contributes to work-family theories by challenging the long-held assumption that family demands are detrimental to employees and result in a higher level of WFC (Frone et al. 1997). In contrast, we suggest that a team's level of family demands does not tell the whole story because under certain conditions, family demands diversity actually has a positive influence on teams. In doing so, we add to the scholarly understanding of the complexity of the family both as a source of resources (i.e., family demands diversity) and a source of constraints (i.e., team family identity). Second, we expand the CEM to consider the exchange of relational resources. While the cognitive-oriented approach to diversity is certainly beneficial, it does not consider other ways that diversity can contribute to team effectiveness, most notably, in the exchange of relational resources that are high in particularism and concreteness. This integration expands the theoretical reach of CEM and reshapes how diversity is understood in relation to team functioning. Third, our study offers valuable insights for HR practices aimed at supporting employees in managing the work-family interface. Rather than treating family demands diversity as a problem to solve, our findings suggest that HR professionals should recognize it as a strategic opportunity to harness. Our study expands HR diversity management practices by encouraging HR professionals to shift their focus from conventional diversity dimensions such

as gender and race—often the subject of debate—to more nuanced and underexplored aspects of diversity that exist within the family domain (Jehn and Conlon 2018). Our conceptual model offers novel insights on how HR practitioners can foster conditions that transform family demands diversity into a catalyst for positive team outcomes.

2 | Theoretical Foundation

HR practitioners have increasingly recognized how employees' family domains impact work outcomes and have taken steps to help them address their family needs (e.g., Bainbridge and Townsend 2020; Buonocore and Russo 2013; Wayne et al. 2020). However, HR policies, such as flexible scheduling, tend to be individually-focused, addressing each employee's own family needs (Li et al. 2018). In contrast, HR professionals pay less attention to how differences in family experiences among members impact team outcomes. We address this lacuna by integrating research related to work-family and diversity (Perry et al. 2016).

One of the most influential diversity theories is the Categorization Elaboration Model (CEM: van Knippenberg et al. 2004). This theory has been used to explain relationships in different research areas, including the HR literature (e.g., De Meulenaere and Kunze 2021). CEM posits that team diversity leads to positive outcomes because of the sharing of cognitive resources. Specifically, diverse individuals possess different types of cognitive resources that result in more system flexibility, especially in terms of sharing and processing of task-relevant information and knowledge. This argument is consistent with the integration-and-learning perspective whereby diversity is viewed as a source of learning and knowledge within a team (Ely and Thomas 2001). To illustrate, Kearney et al. (2022) argued that gender diversity results in higher team performance because men and women bring different experiences, cognitive styles, problem-solving tendencies, and knowledge to the decision-making process, thereby allowing the team to achieve higher levels of effectiveness.

CEM, with its primary focus on the exchange of cognitive resources, does not account for the exchange of other types of resources. Social exchange theory emphasizes the exchange of relational resources, such as time spent and effort made, that benefit one's exchange partner (Blau 1964). The theory posits that when an individual offers resources to another person, the beneficiary feels obligated to return the favor, leading to ongoing resource exchange (Blau 1964). Further, such resource exchange has the potential to transform a relationship from one that is economic and quid-pro-quo in nature to one that is trusting and long-lasting (Cropanzano et al. 2017). Existing HR research has used social exchange theory to explore how employees' relationships with the organization are shaped by diversity policies and practices (e.g., Ali and French 2019; Tufan et al. 2019). Less is known, however, about how the presence of certain types of diversity—such as family demands diversity—fosters exchange relationships through the use of relational resources.

According to Foa and Foa (1980), exchanged resources are categorized along two dimensions: particularism and concreteness. Particularism refers to the extent to which a resource is

valued by a specific target or by everyone. For example, money as an exchanged resource is low on particularism because it is valued (and can be used) by everyone. In contrast, love as an exchanged resource is high on particularism because it is personal and is likely to be exchanged with someone close (Reed and Aquino 2003). Concreteness refers to the extent to which a resource is tangible or intangible. For example, information and advice are low on concreteness because such resources may or may not result in tangible outcomes. In contrast, services and goods are high on concreteness because they are visible and lead to tangible outcomes. Cognitive resources, such as knowledge and insights emphasized in the CEM, are typically low on concreteness and particularism, as they are abstract and not tied to a specific person. In contrast, relational resources, such as covering a shift for a teammate with a sick child, tend to be high on both particularism (as they benefit a specific person) and concreteness (as they involve tangible actions) (Flynn 2003). Relational resources foster personalized social bonds and reciprocal exchange, which are central mechanisms outlined in social exchange theory. Thus, while the CEM explains the benefits of diverse cognitive inputs, it overlooks how diversity, family demands diversity in particular, can drive mutual aid behavior in teams through relational resource exchange, ultimately contributing to team effectiveness.

While these arguments imply a main effect of family demands diversity on team outcomes, it is important to note that diversity scholars have declared "the bankruptcy of the main effect approach" in favor of concentrating on moderating variables explaining when diversity helps or hurts team outcomes (van Knippenberg and Schippers 2007, 518). Thus, an important goal of our study is to examine under what conditions family demands diversity fosters or inhibits the exchange of cognitive and relational resources within a team. We address this issue next in the Hypothesis Development section.

3 | Hypotheses Development

Family demands are more than just the size of a person's family (ten Brummelhuis, van der Lippe, et al. 2010). Instead, such demands require physical effort (e.g., house cleaning), cognitive engagement (e.g., problem-solving household issues), psychological effort (e.g., rumination), and/or interpersonal skills (e.g., guiding children through social and educational challenges). Most early research on family demands did not consider the possibility that high family demands could foster the development of skills, knowledge, and experiences that can be applied to the work domain (ten Brummelhuis and Van der Lippe 2010; ten Brummelhuis, van der Lippe, et al. 2010). However, Greenhaus and Powell (2006) argued that the family domain was a fertile ground for the development of work-beneficial resources such as interpersonal skills (e.g., communication), social capital (e.g., a larger social network), and management/cognitive skills (e.g., time management). Our research builds on the idea that family demands can enrich work domains, but we deviate from this idea by concentrating on when family demands are beneficial for teams, rather than individuals themselves. To develop our thesis that family demands can be beneficial for teams, we start by arguing that family demands diversity results in team backup behavior when there is low team family identity.

Backup behavior entails three behavioral markers: (a) team members recognize that some of their teammates are overwhelmed whereas others are underutilized; (b) team members shift their workloads from those who are overwhelmed to those who are underutilized; and (c) team members assist each other to complete team tasks (Salas et al. 2005). Importantly, backup behavior entails both sharing expertise and knowledge and sharing workload, with the former focusing on cognitive resources and the latter focusing on relational resources (Coman et al. 2014; Porter et al. 2010).

Drawing on the CEM, we argue that family demands diversity generates a large pool of cognitive resources that facilitates backup behavior (McMullan et al. 2018). To illustrate, individuals with different family demands may develop different routines in how to handle daily activities, maintain task focus, and juggle multiple tasks. They may share knowledge and insights with one another on how to make best use of the limited work time and complete work in an efficient manner (Perry et al. 2016). In addition, individuals with different family demands likely develop different levels of cognitive flexibility, allowing them to assist one another to respond effectively to time-pressured work situations. The exchanged resources can benefit everyone in the team (low on particularism) and are cognitive in nature (low on concreteness). Overall, these arguments suggest that family demands diversity creates team knowledge that has the potential to lead to team backup behavior (Porter 2005; Porter et al. 2010).

From a social exchange theory standpoint, family demands diversity also creates opportunities for team members to share relational resources. When a team member is overwhelmed by work, teammates with lower family demands may step in to provide backup, offering their time and effort as relational resources. Social exchange theory suggests that the exchange between two parties is reciprocal rather than one-sided (Blau 1964). When one individual exhibits a good-will gesture to another (such as taking over the workload from an overwhelmed employee), the person at the receiving end of the favor feels indebted to the backup provider, thereby prompting him or her to reciprocate when opportunities arise (Cropanzano et al. 2017). Even individuals who generally have high family demands may experience an ebb and flow of these demands over time. For example, a mother with multiple young children may be able to support a colleague—who previously assisted her—during school hours when she has more available time. These exchanges are high on particularism (as they benefit a specific individual), and high on concreteness (as they entail specific actions and provide tangible benefits), reinforcing a cycle of mutual support within the team and potentially leading to team backup behavior.

However, decades of diversity research have shown that diversity of any type is fraught with difficulties leading to conflict and no guarantee of beneficial outcomes (Horwitz and Horwitz 2007; Joshi and Roh 2009; van Dick et al. 2008). The mixed findings associated with team diversity have led to calls for scholars to investigate the conditions under which diversity leads to positive or negative effects. Given our focus on family demands diversity, we argue that team family identity (Bagger et al. 2014; Powell and Greenhaus 2012) is a critical factor moderating the relationship between family demands diversity and team backup behavior (Powell and Greenhaus 2010; Randel 2002).

The moderating role of identity has been studied previously in the diversity literature (e.g., Randel 2002). The concept of identity is related to roles and although individuals have multiple roles, they tend to most identify with roles that are self-defining and are motivated to enhance the success of the roles with which they strongly identify (Bagger et al. 2014). In a team that comprises of individuals who are high on family identity, team members prioritize the well-being and success of their own family role, such that their performance in their family role is more meaningful and important than other roles (Bagger et al. 2014; Greenhaus and Powell 2003). As team members' commitments to their own family roles take precedence, team members reduce their responsiveness to the diverse family demands of other team members (Knapp et al. 2013). Accordingly, we argue that team members are less likely to exchange resources with one another as a function of family demands diversity when team family identity is high. Consistent with this argument, Greenhaus et al. (2012) showed that individuals with higher family identity were less likely to invest in the work domain, even when their individual situations made it possible.

In contrast, when a team has a low team family identity, team members are less preoccupied with their own family needs. As a result, they are more cognitively and emotionally available to engage in team-oriented resource exchanges. In such teams, team members are more likely to capitalize on high family demands diversity by increasing backup behaviors. Other research has found that lower (versus higher) identity levels can operate as valuable moderators of workplace relationships. For example, Jiang and Johnson (2018) showed that the effect of meaningful work on employees' affective commitment was stronger when their work identity was lower (versus higher). In another study, LaBella and van Knippenberg (2024) found that high-quality coworker relationships were more negatively related to employee loneliness when work identity was lower (versus higher). Although these studies looked at work identity levels, rather than family identity levels, they provide evidence that low identity levels can have valuable influences on work-relevant relationships. Together, these studies offer support to our argument that when team family identity is low, team members may become more attuned to family demands diversity within a team, leading them to engage in team backup behavior. In contrast, we do not expect to see a relationship between family demands diversity and team backup behavior at high levels of team family identity.

Hypothesis 1. *Family demands diversity has a positive relationship with team backup behavior when team family identity is low.*

Further, we propose that team backup behavior, in the form of resource exchange among team members, reduces team work–family conflict (WFC).[1] Unlike past research that views team WFC as merely a collection of individual WFC (Bhave et al. 2010), we conceptualize it as an emergent team state that derives from two aspects of the team environment. First, the shared work and social context makes team WFC a salient feature of the team environment. Shared WFC perceptions emerge because "team members share the same team structure, the same supervisor, and the same work, as well as working with one another" (Moen et al. 2015, 87).

Given that individuals tend to pay attention to the same cues shared within a team, the shared point of reference facilitates agreement in team WFC (Shteynberg 2015). Second, people engage in sensemaking by using cues in the social environment (Salancik and Pfeffer 1978). When it comes to WFC, team members draw from the experience of their coworkers to characterize the team environment. Such discussions provide knowledge to team members who use it as a reference to interpret their own experiences.

When team members engage in backup behavior, they exchange cognitive resources to help teammates complete their work tasks more effectively and relational resources to facilitate the workload of their teammates. As a result, the entire team completes tasks in a timely manner such that work is less likely to encroach onto family time for team members. In addition, when team members exchange work methods and solutions through team backup behavior, they are less likely to struggle with their workload and more likely to detect potential mistakes (Porter et al. 2010, 2011). Team backup behavior also allows the entire team to become adaptive to changing environments (Salas et al. 2005), limiting work stress spillover onto the family domain.

While these arguments imply a direct effect of team backup behavior on team WFC, research has shown that team backup behavior may not always result in its intended effect (e.g., Barnes et al. 2011). Thus, we build on the HR literature that highlights the role of the leader in facilitating employees' management of the work-family interface (Kossek et al. 2023; Li et al. 2017). Specifically, we focus on the role of supervisor family support in optimizing the benefits stemming from team backup behavior. Such support can be instrumental, such as allowing employees to have their preferred work schedule so that they can pick up their children after school, or socioemotional, such as empathizing with employees who struggle to simultaneously meet work and family demands.

Some scholars have researched the direct effect of supervisor family support on WFC (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985), whereas other researchers have found that supervisor family support moderates the effects of stressors on WFC (see Li et al. 2017, for a comprehensive review of the literature). We follow the latter train of research by positioning supervisor family support as a moderator. However, unlike past research that conceptualizes supervisor support as a recovery factor that allows employees to more effectively cope with stressors (Griggs et al. 2013), we focus on how leaders manage team work–family conflict by leveraging team backup behavior (e.g., Nishii and Mayer 2009; Salas et al. 2005).

Specifically, we propose that when teams have high levels of supervisor family support, there is a negative relationship between team backup behavior and team WFC. First, as described earlier, team backup behavior involves the sharing of relational resources such that individuals step up to help a teammate who needs assistance. Given that providing backup is resource depleting, a family supportive supervisor will monitor the backup providers' workloads to prevent overextension. As Barnes et al. (2011) pointed out, backup behavior should be used only when there are benefit–cost tradeoffs for such activities. Hence,

family-supportive supervisors are motivated to ensure that team backup behavior does not come at the expense of other team members. Second, as noted earlier, team backup behavior involves the sharing of cognitive resources to enhance work performance. However, the effectiveness of backup behavior hinges on whether the recipient accepts the insights and knowledge (Smith-Jentsch et al. 2009). Supervisors can serve as a backup advocate by signaling their family support to their team (Barnes et al. 2008), reinforcing the idea that such insights and knowledge should be accepted and can benefit the work-family interface for everyone in the team (Mesmer-Magnus and Glew 2012). In doing so, these leaders create a psychologically safe space where team members feel safe to share and accept cognitive resources, resulting in lower team WFC. Our argument is consistent with backup behavior research that the effects of such behavior will be more positive when it is legitimized (i.e., when a supervisor is family supportive) (Johnson et al. 2018).

Hypothesis 2. *Team backup behavior has a negative relationship with team WFC when supervisor family support is high.*

High levels of team WFC reflect an emergent team state and sends a signal that team members must make personal sacrifices for work, that their organization prioritizes work over their well-being, and that their organization shows little concern for their needs (Bhave et al. 2010). In accordance with social exchange theory, when team WFC is high, team members may question their long-term relationship with the organization, the importance of the employee's well-being to their employer, and the extent to which their organization cares about their needs outside of work. These arguments suggest that high levels of WFC within the team may lead team members to respond by withholding work effort or team effort that benefits their employer (Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). In other words, high levels of team WFC are likely to reduce the team's work effort. In contrast, when team WFC is low, team members are likely to view the work environment favorably by inferring that their employer cares about their family needs. Thus, they will be motivated to put forth more effort at work in order to repay their employer's goodwill.

Hypothesis 3. *Team WFC has a negative relationship with team effort.*

Finally, combining these theoretical arguments, we propose the following moderated mediation hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4. *The positive indirect relationship between family demands diversity and team effort through team backup behavior and team WFC is moderated by team family identity and supervisor family support such that the mediated effect is more positive when team family identity is low and when supervisor family support is high.*

4 | Method

We collected longitudinal survey data from 108 teams in five technology-based firms in Southern China in 2019.[2] Before data collection, members of the research team conducted site visits to confirm that the target teams in these firms exhibited high

levels of interdependence. In collaboration with the firms' HR representatives, we verified that the teams were relatively stable, worked in person, and maintained significant interdependence in their work processes. Team members collaborated closely together under the direct supervision of a team leader to design, develop, test, market, and/or service the products for which they were responsible. The teams adhered to a non-flexible schedule with frequent overtime requirements. HR representatives informed the teams and their leaders of the upcoming study and encouraged their participation. We obtained the rosters of 111 teams (849 team members and 111 team leaders) and the email address of every member in the teams (including the email address of the team leader). In the invitation email, we asked each respondent to complete a survey through a hyperlink. The email also included a statement from the upper management of the respective firms in support of our study. Team members from 108 teams responded to the survey. Of these 108 teams (average team size 6.23, SD = 5.03), 105 team leaders responded to the team leader survey. The overall response rate was 81% (79% for team members and 95% for team leaders). We retained all responses for subsequent analyses. For team members, the average age was 30 (SD = 6), 45% were women, 49% were married, and the average number of children was 0.40. Team members have worked under their leaders for an average of 2.71 years (SD = 2.63). For team leaders, the average age was 35 (SD = 6), 38% were women, 79% were married, and the average number of children was 0.87.

4.1 | Measures

We collected four surveys over a four-month time period with approximately 1 month between each wave of data collection. At Time 1, team members reported their family demands, family identity, supervisor family support, as well as demographic information, while team leaders reported their demographic information. At Time 2, team members rated their teams' backup behavior. At Time 3, team members assessed their perceptions of team work–family conflict. At Time 4, team leaders rated team effort. We used the Chinese version of several existing scales that had been translated in previous research. We followed the translation back-translation method (Brislin 1970) when a Chinese version was unavailable. All the measures were rated on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

4.1.1 | Family Demands Diversity

We assessed each team member's family demands with 10 items from ten Brummelhuis, Peper, and Hoeven (2010). Some sample items are: "I cannot sleep at night because of troubles at home" and "I have to carry out a lot of tasks at home" ($\alpha = 0.88$). Using the participants' responses to the family demands scale from ten Brummelhuis, Peper, and Hoeven (2010), we operationalized family demands diversity using within-team standard deviation (see Bedeian and Mossholder 2000). This diversity operationalization is consistent with a separation view of diversity (Harrison and Klein 2007). To rule out the influence of team family demands level, we controlled for the mean level of team members' family demands (Ferguson and Peterson 2015).

4.1.2 | Team Family Identity

Family identity was assessed with a five-item scale ($\alpha = 0.90$) by Matthews et al. (2010). A sample item is "My family is more important to me than anything else." Although family identity has traditionally been studied as an individual-level construct, we conceptualize it as a team-level construct. In the same way that team personality is aggregated from individual members' scores on a personality scale (e.g., LePine 2003), team family identity was calculated as the average of the individual family identity scores based on the additive model (Chan 1998). Specifically, teams have high family identity when, on average, team members place strong value on and identify with their family role.

4.1.3 | Supervisor Family Support

Supervisor family support was measured with a seven-item scale ($\alpha = 0.94$) by Hammer et al. (2009) that focuses on social and instrumental support from the supervisor. A sample item is "My supervisor is willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and family life." Most of the studies examine supervisor family support at the individual level, because such support is often idiosyncratic in nature based on the specific needs of the employees (e.g., Bagger and Li 2014; Li et al. 2015). In addition, the appraisal of how supportive one's supervisor is of one's family needs is likely to be affective in nature because it focuses on how such support impacts the self (Wallace et al. 2016). Thus, a personal referent was used when measuring supervisor family support and we used a direct consensus approach to aggregate individual responses to the team level.

4.1.4 | Team Backup Behavior

Team backup behavior was assessed with a four-item scale ($\alpha = 0.89$) by Joo and Dennen (2017). Using the team as the referent, the measure captured the extent to which each individual team member perceived the team's collective attempt to provide task-relevant support to each other. A sample item is "In this team, we help those who are unable to fulfill their roles."

4.1.5 | Team Work–Family Conflict

Team work–family conflict was measured with a six-item scale ($\alpha = 0.94$) from Carlson et al. (2000). A sample item is "Members of my team sometimes miss family activities due to the amount of time we must spend on work responsibilities." Since team WFC represents a cognitive assessment of the work environment, a referent shift approach was used to aggregate individual responses to the team level (Wallace et al. 2016).

4.1.6 | Team Effort

Supervisors were asked to rate the effort of the team using a five-item scale (Flynn and Schaumberg 2012) ($\alpha = 0.94$). We adapted the items to capture the level of effort by the team as a whole. A sample item is "This team works at its full capacity in all of the job duties."

TABLE 1 | Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and inter-correlations.

Team-level variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Team family identity	0.90											
2. Supervisor family support	0.37	0.94										
3. Team family demands	0.20	−0.15	0.88									
4. Family demands diversity	0.04	0.06	−0.12	—								
5. Team backup behavior	0.19	0.41	−0.16	0.09	0.89							
6. Team work–family conflict	0.28	−0.02	0.24	−0.20	−0.15	0.94						
7. Supervisor-rated team effort	0.07	0.10	−0.02	0.16	0.18	−0.21	0.94					
8. Team work demands	0.20	−0.11	0.29	0.04	−0.11	0.47	0.01	0.84				
9. Team size	−0.09	−0.13	−0.14	0.07	−0.07	0.07	0.03	0.14	—			
10. Team gender diversity	−0.41	−0.31	−0.12	0.05	−0.07	−0.21	−0.10	−0.16	0.20	—		
11. Team age diversity	−0.05	−0.02	0.07	0.00	0.12	−0.19	0.09	−0.12	0.10	−0.07	—	
12. Team children diversity	0.03	−0.13	−0.01	−0.07	−0.10	−0.05	0.06	0.09	0.28	−0.08	0.38	—
M	5.24	4.86	3.66	0.97	5.33	3.41	5.85	4.46	6.23	0.30	3.72	0.29
SD	0.62	0.61	0.54	0.41	0.50	0.66	0.94	0.52	5.03	0.20	2.38	0.23

Note: $N_{\text{individual-level}} = 673$, $N_{\text{team-level}} = 105–108$. When $|r| > 0.19$, $p < 0.05$; when $|r| > 0.25$, $p < 0.01$. Cronbach's alphas are reported in italics on the diagonal when applicable.

4.1.7 | Control Variables

We included three sets of control variables to rule out potential alternative explanations. First, one may argue that family demands diversity may simply reflect diversity of surface-level demographic variables. That is, dealing with greater family demands may co-vary with one's age (being older and having more family responsibilities), gender (females having to shoulder more domestic responsibilities), and number of children (caring for children demands time and effort). To rule out the influence of these surface-level diversity variables, we controlled for team diversity in age, gender, and number of children. Age diversity was operationalized using the standard deviation of the ages of team members. Diversity in gender and number of children were operationalized using Blau's index. Second, team members' work demands may influence work–family conflict. Thus, we measured work demands at Time 1 using a six-item measure ($\alpha = 0.84$) by Butler (2007). A sample item is "My job requires a great deal of work to be done." Finally, we controlled for team size to rule out its potential influence on team backup behavior and team WFC.[3]

4.2 | Aggregation

Because we theorized that members of the same team would share similar perceptions regarding the team's backup behavior, supervisor family support, and WFC, it is important to assess whether team members reached consensus to warrant

aggregation to the team level. The predominant index to assess within-team agreement (i.e., consensus) is r_{wg} (Hofmann 2002; LeBreton and Senter 2008). The mean $r_{\text{wg(j)}}$ values for team backup behavior, supervisor family support, and team WFC were 0.93, 0.90, and 0.82, respectively, indicating that team members indeed had a shared understanding of the three constructs.[4] We also examined intraclass correlation (ICC1) to assess the proportion of observed variance attributable to team membership (Bliese 2000). For team backup behavior, supervisor family support, and team WFC, the ICC(1) values were 0.09, 0.11, and 0.07, respectively. These values suggest that team membership accounted for a medium effect (see LeBreton and Senter 2008, 838) in individuals' responses to the three constructs, further supporting the aggregation of individual responses to the team level.

5 | Results

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations of the study variables. We performed CFA with Mplus 8.10 (Muthén and Muthén 2014) to ensure the measures rated by team members captured distinct constructs as intended. To reduce the large number of parameters estimated in the model, we utilized the item-to-construct balance approach (Little et al. 2002) to create item parcels for measures containing six or more items. A two-level CFA including all employee-reported variables yielded reasonable fit to the data, $\chi^2 = 1487.65$, df = 695, CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.041. Because all

TABLE 2 | Unstandardized coefficients from revised path model.

|	Team-level outcome		
	Team backup behavior	**Team work–family conflict**	**Supervisor-rated effort**
Family demands diversity	0.08 (0.11)	−0.34** (0.12)	
Family demands level	−0.26** (0.09)	0.06 (0.11)	
Team family identity	0.15† (0.08)	0.16† (0.10)	
Family demands diversity × team family identity	**−0.66* (0.26)**	−0.38 (0.30)	
Team backup behavior		−0.20† (0.11)	
Supervisor family support		−0.08 (0.10)	
Team backup behavior × supervisor family support		**−0.35** (0.12)**	
Team work–family conflict			**−0.41** (0.16)**
Work demands	−0.07 (0.09)	0.42*** (0.11)	0.21 (0.19)
Team size	−0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)
Gender diversity	0.07 (0.26)	−0.35 (0.29)	−0.72 (0.48)
Age diversity	0.04† (0.02)	−0.03 (0.02)	0.01 (0.04)
Children diversity	−0.33 (0.22)	−0.37 (0.24)	−0.02 (0.42)
R^2	0.18	0.42	0.20

Note: $†p < 0.10$; $*p < 0.05$; $**p < 0.01$. Hypothesized effects from the original model are presented in bold. Unstandardized coefficients are reported. Standardized errors are reported in parentheses. All predictors were grand-mean centered prior to analysis.

study hypotheses reside at the team level, we tested the research model using team-level data. Given the complexity of the research model, we fit the research model in Mplus using observed score interactions. This initial model yielded poor fit to the data, $\chi^2 = 31.36$, df = 13, CFI = 0.74, RMSEA = 0.114. Considering family demands diversity, team family identity, and their interaction term may exert influence on team WFC beyond what was mediated through team backup behavior, we added the direct effects of these variables, as well as family demands level, in a revised model. This revised model provided reasonable fit to the data, $\chi^2 = 16.08$, df = 9, CFI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.085. We present the unstandardized coefficients from this revised model in Table 2.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that the association between family demands diversity and team backup behavior would be positive when team family identity is low. Supporting this hypothesis, team family identity interacted with family demands diversity to predict team backup behavior ($B = −0.66$, $p = 0.01$, see Figure 2). At a low level of family identity (–1 SD below the mean), family demands diversity had a positive effect on team backup behavior, $B = 0.49$, $p = 0.01$. In contrast, at a high level of family identity (1 SD above the mean), family demands diversity had a negative, albeit nonsignificant, effect on team backup behavior, $B = −0.33$, $p = 0.08$. It is worth noting that the overall effect of family demands diversity on team backup behavior was nonsignificant ($B = 0.08$, $p = 0.46$).

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the association between team backup behavior and team WFC would be negative when supervisor family support is high. Supporting this hypothesis, we found a significant interaction ($B = −0.35$, $p = 0.004$) as reflected
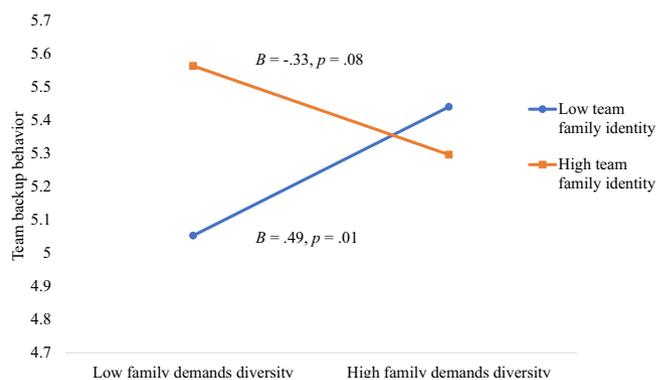
FIGURE 2 | Team family identity interacting with family demands diversity to predict team backup behavior.

in Figure 3. At a low level of supervisor family support, team backup behavior had a nonsignificant association with team WFC ($B = 0.01$, $p = 0.94$); whereas at a high level of support, team backup behavior negatively predicted team WFC ($B = −0.41$, $p = 0.003$). Of note, the main effect of team backup behavior on team WFC was negative but nonsignificant ($B = −0.20$, $p = 0.07$).

Hypothesis 3 predicted that team WFC would be negatively related to team effort. Supporting the hypothesis, team WFC negatively predicted supervisor-rated team effort, $B = −0.41$, $p = 0.008$. Hypothesis 4 predicted that the mediated effect would be moderated by team family identity and supervisor family support. In support of Hypothesis 4, the overall index of moderated mediation (Hayes 2015) was significant, $B = −0.09$, with a 95%
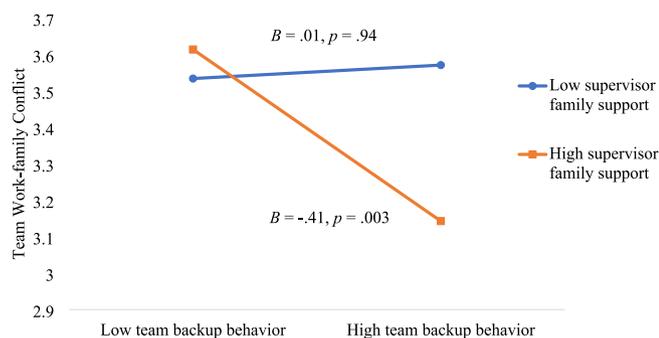
FIGURE 3 | Supervisor family support interacting with team backup behavior to predict team work–family conflict.

TABLE 3 | Bootstrapped conditional indirect effects.

Team family identity	Supervisor family support	Indirect effect	95% CI	
Outcome = team effort				
Low	Low	0.00	−0.06	0.07
Low	**High**	**0.08**	**0.01**	**0.32**
High	Low	0.00	−0.05	0.05
High	High	−0.06	−0.27	0.00

Note: Conditional indirect effects at low (-1SD) and high (+1SD) levels of first stage (team family identity) and second stage (supervisor family support) moderators. Bootstrapped $N = 5,000$. Rows shown in bold contain indirect effects whose confidence intervals did not include zero.

CI of [−0.38, −0.01]. As shown in the conditional indirect effects (Table 3), family demands diversity had a positive indirect effect on team effort only when team members had low team family identity and high supervisor family support, $B = 0.08$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.32].

5.1 | Supplementary Analyses

We performed two sets of supplementary analyses. First, we included the diversity of the age of team members' children as a control variable. Adding this control variable did not change the conclusion of our study. Second, we examined whether there was a curvilinear moderating effect, rather than a linear moderating effect, of team family identity on the relationship between family demands diversity and backup behavior. Our analysis modeling the curvilinear effect of team family identity as a moderator was not significant.

6 | Discussion

Most of the work–family literature focuses on family demands as a private concern that exhausts employee resources and leads to negative work and family outcomes (Yang et al. 2000). Departing from this view, we found that, under certain conditions, family demands diversity was positively and indirectly related to supervisor-rated team effort; this indirect effect was mediated sequentially by team backup behavior and team WFC,

and moderated by team family identity and supervisor family support.

6.1 | Theoretical Implications

Our research contributes to the diversity literature by integrating the CEM with social exchange theory. Family demands diversity is unique in that under certain conditions, it can facilitate the exchange of cognitive resources that are low on particularism and concreteness and relational resources that are high on particularism and concreteness. The recognition of the particular/concrete features of resources may open up research opportunities for investigations into diversity types often ignored in the literature. For example, Volk et al. (2017) studied how chronotype diversity may facilitate team members' resource exchange based on each person's energy peaks and troughs. Hence, chronotype diversity can facilitate the exchange of resources that are both low (e.g., sharing information) and also high (e.g., stepping up to help a teammate who is low on energy) on particularism/concreteness. Thus, our integration of the CEM with social exchange theory allows future research to more precisely predict the resource benefits of diversity. On the whole, diversity research (and CEM in particular) assumes that diversity yields positive outcomes only if relational challenges linked to diversity can be overcome (Johnson et al. 2018). By integrating the CEM with social exchange theory, our study suggests that certain types of diversity—such as family demands diversity—can provide both cognitive and relational benefits without necessarily incurring relational costs under certain conditions (Mamman et al. 2012). Thus, our research broadens our understanding of diversity by highlighting its multifaceted nature and encourages future research to explore how different types of diversity, beyond demographic diversity, impact teams and their member behaviors. Specifically, future studies could examine how diverse forms of resource exchange—both cognitive and relational—foster team effectiveness, innovation, and overall organizational success.

Our finding that the positive effect of family demands diversity on team backup behavior only occurs when the team has low team family identity is consistent with declarations that diversity effects are contingent on contextual factors (van Knippenberg and Schippers 2007). This finding suggests that we should not study diversity in isolation; it is only by understanding the contextual factors that heighten, or dampen, effective use of shared cognitive and relational resources that we will truly be able to unlock the opportunities provided to us by diverse teams. By showing that low team family identity facilitates the resource benefits of family demands diversity, we answer recent calls that diversity research should account for how values associated with social categories (e.g., identity importance) impact responses to diversity (Roberson et al. 2017; van Knippenberg and Schippers 2007).

Our study also contributes to work-family theories in two important ways. First, past research on the interface between work and family tends to take a binary approach, focusing on either conflict (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985) or enrichment (Greenhaus and Powell 2006) between the two domains. Based on the demand-resource model (Bakker and Demerouti 2017), demands are expected to predict work–family conflict, whereas

resources are expected to predict enrichment (e.g., Huang et al. 2019). Our research suggests that the demand-resource distinction may not be as clear cut as previously assumed (Bakker and Demerouti 2017). Focusing on diversity in family demands allows us to challenge this binary view, showing that family demands do not have to be "a distraction from work, a source of interference that weakens performance" (Menges et al. 2017, 696). We present family demands diversity as a novel diversity type that enriches the work domain through team backup behavior under certain conditions. Our focus on team backup behavior is also theoretically important given that work–family conflict/enrichment research tends to focus on how the involvement in one domain impacts self-referenced processes such as family/work fulfillment, motivation, and stress, rather than interpersonal processes such as team backup behavior (ten Brummelhuis, van der Lippe, et al. 2010).

Second, our study underscores the importance of studying work-family constructs at the team level. Past research has shown the positive effects of high family identity on individual-level outcomes (e.g., it allows individuals to respond more positively to stressors; Carr et al. 2008). However, at the team level, high family identity undermines the potential positive effects of family demands diversity. This provides a fresh perspective on how team-level identities shape the impact of diversity on team dynamics and interactions. Additionally, we broaden the role of team members by demonstrating that they can serve as a valuable source of both cognitive and relational resources (as a result of family demands diversity within a team), beyond the role of helping each other "put out fires" when family emergencies occur that conflict with work as they are typically portrayed in the literature (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran 2009). This insight opens up new possibilities for understanding how teams can exchange resources and enhance collaboration. Finally, although past research has found a negative relationship between individual-level supervisor family support and individual-level WFC (Li et al. 2017), we did not hypothesize this relationship at the team level, and our results reflect that there was not a relationship between these variables at the team-level (see Table 2). We hypothesized, and our results show, the negative relationship between team backup behavior and team WFC only occurred when teams experienced supervisor family support, supporting our argument that family supportive leaders facilitate team resource exchange, thus improving the overall functioning of the team. Our study highlights the value of integrating a teams-perspective into work-family research, providing new insights into how family demands diversity and team-level support systems can operate in harmony to reduce team WFC and enhance team outcomes.

Our research also has important implications for work-family research in the HR management domain. In their comprehensive review of the work–family literature, Allen and French (2023) identified two key intersections between work-family and HR management: (1) family-friendly policies and programs and (2) diversity research on the work-family challenges faced by women and sexual/racial minorities. While family-friendly policies and programs can help employees manage the work-family interface (e.g., Li et al. 2018), simply implementing these programs is not enough (Mesmer-Magnus and Glew 2012). Our research suggests that HR researchers need to look beyond

individual policies and explore how organizations can cultivate an eco-system where team members and supervisors collaboratively manage family-originated resources at the team level. Meanwhile, by emphasizing family demands diversity, our study broadens the scope of HR diversity research, which has traditionally centered on demographic differences such as gender and race. This shift is crucial, as teams that appear homogeneous in terms of demographics may still exhibit meaningful variations in family demands. Unlike traditional demographic or functional diversity, family demands diversity is dynamic and malleable, as individual employees experience changing family responsibilities over time. Given this fluidity, HR research could develop interventions, such as workload redistribution strategies and policy frameworks, to effectively leverage family demands diversity and enhance both team performance and employee well-being. HR Scholars should also examine how different types of diversity (such as gender diversity and family demands diversity) may work together interactively (Homan et al. 2007) or via configurations (Antino et al. 2019) to impact team outcomes (Jehn and Conlon 2018).

6.2 | Practical Implications

When employees who have different family arrangements work together, there is likely to be diversity in family demands. Our findings offer several key implications for HR practitioners and organizational leaders. First, we challenge the misconception that differences in family demands inevitably lead to workplace conflict and resentment (Mesmer-Magnus and Viswesvaran 2009). Instead, under the right conditions, family demands diversity can promote team backup behavior and lead to more effective team functioning. To leverage the beneficial effects of family demands diversity, HR professionals may implement structured activities that promote awareness and coordination around family demands (Hunter et al. 2010). To this end, we propose five suggestions that HR practitioners can undertake to maximize team backup behavior when a team has family demands diversity: (1) offer team-based incentives that encourage mutual support; (2) assign teammates with prior working relationships to the same team to enhance trust and coordination (Smith-Jentsch et al. 2009); (3) use role-play exercises to help employees learn how to navigate and leverage family demands diversity; (4) establish coordination mechanisms that enable team members to proactively recognize and respond to legitimate backup needs (Salas et al. 2005); and (5) monitor overall team workload capacities to ensure that team backup behavior does not overburden certain employees while others remain underutilized (Porter et al. 2003).

Second, HR practitioners can implement strategies to ensure that family demands diversity fosters, rather than hinders, team backup behavior. Given that high team family identity may unintentionally hinder resource exchange, HR professionals can engage in activities that foster an inclusive team culture and develop skills associated with effective resource exchange. One approach is to implement cross-functional team training, where employees learn to recognize and accommodate different family-related challenges within their teams. Another approach is to develop structured team agreements that establish clear norms for workload sharing and team backup behavior,

ensuring that support is distributed fairly. Regular team discussions or reflection sessions can also help employees communicate their needs transparently.

Third, our study focuses on how, under the right conditions, organizations can harness the potential associated with family demands diversity. However, given that such conditions do not always exist, it behooves HR professionals and line managers to take proactive actions to head off what may happen under the wrong conditions. As we demonstrated in our study, when team family identity was high, teams did not experience backup behavior as a result of family demands diversity. Thus, in a team where many team members prioritize their family role, HR professionals and line managers should focus on the specific and unique needs of each team member to provide idiosyncratic work arrangements. Taking such a need-based approach to work-family arrangements (Veiga et al. 2004) may even out the diverse family demands within a team, thereby reducing potential negative reactions to family demands diversity.

Finally, our research highlights the critical role played by leaders in realizing the benefits of team backup behavior in reducing team WFC. Past research suggests that supervisory training is an effective strategy for enhancing family-friendly leadership. For example, Hammer et al. (2016) recommended that training programs should help supervisors understand the importance of assisting employees in managing work–family conflict, develop practical skills for offering family support, and actively monitor their own supportive behavior. Given that managing diversity represents a strategic priority for many organizations (Nishii and Mayer 2009), organizations should adopt supervisor family support training to amplify the benefits of team backup behavior and improve overall team functioning.

6.3 | Limitations and Future Research

Several study limitations should be noted as potential avenues for future research. First, we focus on the overall experience of family demands in our study, as opposed to specific types of family demands. Thus, our study makes an implicit assumption that all types of family demands have similar effects. For example, helping children with their schoolwork is assumed to be as qualitatively similar an experience as caring for a sick spouse. This assumption should be explicitly tested in future research. Second, relatedly, we focus on team members' subjective perceptions of family demands rather than objective indicators such as a spouse's work hours or the number of young children in a team member's family (Kramer and Chung 2015). Given that objective and subjective measures do not always assess the same thing (e.g., Gupta et al. 2010), future research should reexamine our model by using a different measure of family demands. Third, our model proposes that supervisor family support moderates the relationship between team backup behavior and team WFC, and our study supports this prediction. However, we measured supervisor family support at Time 1 rather than Time 2 (when team backup behavior was measured) or Time 3 (when team WFC was measured). We chose Time 1 to measure supervisor family support because we believe that the construct is relatively stable and would not have changed dramatically between Time 1 and Time 2 (a one-month gap) or between Time 1 and

Time 3 (a two-month gap). Measuring these three constructs at three separate time points helped reduce common method bias. Nevertheless, we agree with the comment made by an anonymous reviewer that future research could measure these constructs in the temporal order reflected in our model and re-examine the hypothesized relationships. Finally, while we used a time-lagged approach to temporally separate the key variables in our model and the sequence of the model is consistent with our theoretical arguments, we are not able to make causal inferences. For instance, it is certainly possible that team WFC may impact team backup behavior. We urge future researchers to conduct intervention studies to ascertain the internal validity of our findings.

7 | Conclusion

Our research underscores the value of studying family demands diversity, which has the potential to generate opportunities to exchange both cognitive and relational resources that vary from one another on particularism and concreteness. As employees with diverse family demands increasingly work together, our study provides HR scholars and professionals with important insights to leverage this diversity to enhance team functioning.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Endnotes

[1] Past research has distinguished WFC from family-to-work conflict (FWC, Frone et al. 1992): WFC typically stems from work-related variables whereas FWC typically stems from family-related variables. WFC occurs when work responsibilities deplete resources and impair family functioning (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985). We focus on WFC rather than FWC because team backup behavior enables the team as a whole to complete its work tasks, thus making it less likely that the burdens at work will spill over into the family domain. Our focus is consistent with Bhave et al. (2010) who suggest that team WFC is more likely to be influenced by the interactive processes that occur in the workplace, whereas FWC is more likely to be influenced by each member's unique family experience.

[2] Adding the dummy codes for organizations did not change the pattern of the results.

[3] Although support for the study hypotheses was found with or without including the control variables, we included the controls to rule out plausible alternatives.

[4] We do not report aggregation statistics for team family identity because we used an additive model to average individuals' scores on family identity.

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