

Local IT contributions to building a global information system portfolio after spin-off

Contribuições do TI local na construção do portfólio global de sistemas de informação pós *spin-off*

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Abstract

Purpose: To identify the main contributions a local IT team can make to build a global portfolio of information systems in a new organization created from a business spin-off.

Originality/value: Many multinational corporations have chosen to create spin-offs as an opportunity for strategic reorientation, focusing on specific business verticals. The separation process resulting from the spin-off is critical in IT activities, especially for the business unit spun off from the leading organization, which needs to build a new global portfolio of information systems. Although this is commonly treated as an international project, it must adhere to the strategy of all corporate units (both headquarters and subsidiaries) to maintain a competitive advantage in its markets.

Design/methodology/approach: We present a single qualitative and exploratory case study involving a secular multinational of European origin in the automotive sector that underwent a spin-off process of its main business verticals. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the IT team responsible for one of its subsidiaries in Brazil, which actively participated in this process.

Results: We show that the effective participation of the local units' IT teams, with resources that are already available within the organization and knowledge of the market needs, is an alternative to supporting the central unit responsible for the composition of teams, supporting the local business requirements, and consequently meeting the expected corporate goals through implementation of the spin-off.

Keywords: spin-off, global projects, IT global teams, IS portfolios, corporate strategy

Resumo

Objetivo: Identificar as principais contribuições que podem ser realizadas por um time local de TI na construção do portfólio global de sistemas de informação em uma nova organização criada a partir de um *spin-off* empresarial.

Originalidade/valor: Muitas corporações multinacionais têm optado pelo *spin-off* como uma oportunidade de reorientação estratégica focada em suas diferentes verticais de negócio. O processo de separação resultante do *spin-off* é crítico em relação às atividades de TI, principalmente para a unidade de negócio desmembrada da organização principal, que precisa construir seu novo portfólio global de sistemas de informação, comumente tratado como um projeto global, mas que precisa estar aderente à estratégia de todas suas unidades (matriz e subsidiárias) para manter a vantagem competitiva nos mercados onde atua.

Design/metodologia/abordagem: Estudo de caso único, de natureza qualitativa e exploratória, em uma multinacional secular de origem europeia do segmento automotivo que passou pelo processo de *spin-off* de suas principais verticais de negócio. Foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas no time de TI responsável por uma de suas subsidiárias no Brasil que participou ativamente neste processo.

Resultados: Foi possível identificar que a participação efetiva do time de TI das unidades locais, com recursos já disponíveis na organização e conhecimento das necessidades do mercado, é uma alternativa para suportar os responsáveis centrais na composição dos times, no suporte aos requisitos locais de negócio e, por consequência, no atendimento das metas corporativas esperadas com a implementação do *spin-off*.

Palavras-chave: *spin-off*, projetos globais, times globais de TI, portfólios de SI, estratégia corporativa

INTRODUCTION

Spin-off is a well-known and widely used term in the corporate environment, and refers to a project aiming to separate companies into two or more distinct entities (Aggarwal & Garg, 2019; Bennett & Feldman, 2017; Furlan & Grandinetti, 2014; Wallin, 2012). These projects are often used by companies to create more concise and self-sufficient structures that allow them to focus on strategies aimed at the specificities of their different business verticals, with a faster response to market demands (Bennett & Feldman, 2017; Böhm et al., 2010), and the opportunity to eliminate inefficient synergies (Schweizer & Lagerström, 2020). As the separation of organizational units involves all the organization's operational activities, IT activities naturally form a significant part of this process (Pflügler et al., 2015).

Companies increasingly depend on investments in information systems (IS), which comprise most of their IT resources (Karhade et al., 2015). In this study, the global IS portfolio (GISP) is considered the set of software applications that support a company's organizational performance in all its units of operation and its various dimensions of use (transactional, informational, strategic, and infrastructure) (Tu & Chang, 2016). In a spin-off, building the GISP is particularly challenging due to factors such as contractual and cost constraints, tight timelines, and the very strong interrelationships between professionals in the demerged verticals (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010; Leimeister et al., 2012; Pflügler et al., 2015).

In multinational organizations, the strategy for building a GISP after a definitive demerger must consider the impact on all the locations in which the business vertical operates (i.e., headquarters and subsidiaries) to create fully independent IS for the two companies (i.e., the original organization or "parent company," and the new organization resulting from the spin-off, or "demerged unit"). These obstacles are compounded by the difficulties in engaging the players involved in global projects to use standard systems (Mysore et al., 2021), even though standardization of global systems, in addition to bringing efficiency gains (Haddara, 2018) and reducing complexity (Mocker & Boochever, 2020), allows for a focus on the strategies of the demerged unit (Bennett & Feldman, 2017) and a reduction in system governance costs (Wallin, 2012).

In this context, a significant challenge for the global IT teams in the demerged units involves building a coupled GISP between the headquarters and its subsidiaries. This can support the organization's market competitiveness and meet local, time, and cost constraints. It can also handle the

loss of technological knowledge from the parent company resulting from the spin-off process (Furlan & Grandinetti, 2014; Oktaviani & Prasetyo, 2021).

The literature shows that the leading way to support the construction of a GISP is through collaboration between the various IT teams in the organization (headquarters and subsidiaries). These teams can use local resources and their knowledge of the market to improve the customer experience (Weritz et al., 2020), provide support for legal issues (Fossum et al., 2020), and use the knowledge of the units to facilitate the modularisation and integration of systems (Haddara, 2018).

Academic authors have reported that new digital technologies are helping to reduce the geographical barriers to collaboration between business units, and have highlighted the inequalities and tensions in these relationships (Naidoo & Van Der Merwe, 2021) and given recommendations to enable the teams involved to overcome these conflicts (Fossum et al., 2020; Hartl & Hess, 2017; Mysore et al., 2019; Thalmann et al., 2020; Weritz et al., 2020). However, they have done so from a broader point of view without focusing on the specificities and challenges inherent in the spin-off process, such as the contractual terms between the organizations, the focus on the business verticals that are being spun off, and the loss of knowledge from the original organization. Leimeister et al. (2012) focus on the need for special attention to be paid to local specificities in spin-off projects and underline the contribution that local teams can make to their implementation. Oktaviani and Prasetyo (2021) emphasize the importance of IT support in building the new company after the spin-off and, in particular, the need for all business units to be oriented towards independence from the parent company. Furlan and Grandinetti (2014) point out that intra-organizational relationships strongly impact the spin-off's future performance, especially during the incubation and design phases; however, they discuss this from a conceptual standpoint without presenting proof.

Through the tacit knowledge acquired in the specific areas in which they work, local IT staff can be key to the composition of global project teams through the tacit knowledge acquired in their specific areas of expertise. Thus, this study aims to identify the main contributions that a local IT team can make to the construction of the new GISP of a demerged unit, both in terms of the composition of the global team and regarding liaison and support for the local business, and how this participation can help achieve the corporate goals that arise from the spin-off process.

This research is based on a single case study of a traditional and secular multinational company that was the subject of a spin-off, in which semi-

structured interviews were conducted with professionals from a local IT team involved in the project. As deliverables, we focus on the lessons and recommendations generated from an analysis of the information collected in the interviews, which managers of companies participating in similar spin-off projects can apply in the future.

The relevance of this work is supported by the growing trend for companies to adopt spin-off processes as a way of acquiring competitive advantage through making business verticals more efficient (Farias & Guimarães, 2023), which underlines the need for analysis of this type of restructuring (Nkongho & Makina, 2020). Over the last few years, there have been dozens of spin-off initiatives in different business sectors, such as technology companies (IBM-Kyndryl, Intel-Mobileye), media companies (AT&T-WarnerMedia), food companies (Kelloggs-WK Kellogg Co.), healthcare companies (GE-GE Healthcare, J&J-Kenvue), and energy companies (Jefferies-Vitesse Energy, Inc.), among many others, with varying objectives, such as increasing profitability, optimizing structures, simplifying operations, and achieving practical gains for shareholders (Financial Times, 2023; Suazo, 2023).

As a theoretical contribution, this work explores the main collaborations the new organization's local IT team can undertake in spin-off projects, focusing on the demerged units. It presents information that is not found in the literature. The main benefit of this work for organizations is the possibility of using the empirical knowledge acquired here and the results of the case study (Schoch, 2019) to more effectively use their local IT resources in projects with similar characteristics.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Corporate spin-offs

A corporate spin-off can be understood as an action intended to support strategic reorientation regarding organizations' internal and external growth with multiple business verticals (Oktaviani & Prasetyo, 2021). Spin-offs may originate from mergers and acquisitions that did not obtain the expected results or may arise from questions about the organization's economic performance, market strategy, or even legal/antitrust issues (Schweizer & Lagerström, 2020).

In the corporate environment, IT actions to unlink the systems of the demerged unit from the parent company are required to affect the separation of the original organization into two autonomous assets (Böhm et al.,

2010). For contractual reasons, the systems supporting the various business verticals must be separated within the timeframe defined for the process (Leimeister et al., 2012).

In general, the demerged business unit needs time to fully disengage from its connections with the parent company without jeopardizing the operation of the business, and transitional service agreements (TSAs) are therefore signed between the parties. These will apply during the transition phase between the signature that officially separates the organizational entities (Day One) and the definitive demerger; at this point, any relationship between the parties needs to be terminated. During this transition phase, the parent company acts as the IT service provider for the demerged unit (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010).

Either party does not aim to maintain a TSA for a long time. This agreement provides a maintenance service for the parent company that brings no value (Leimeister et al., 2012). Meanwhile, the demerged unit depends on the parent company for the processes supporting its business. This is at a time when the new company is being built, and the market is evaluating its ability to manage its own business independently (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010).

For the demerged unit, the spin-off process and the consequent reconstruction of its GISP offer a valuable opportunity to replace outdated and complex legacy systems, which in a normal situation, due to the various costs and risks involved, is naturally resisted at both the senior management level and the operational level of the organization (McConnell & Walker, 2019). In multinational companies, the opportunity to replace legacy systems must consider the threats associated with integrating the various global units without negatively impacting the value of the business (Davison et al., 2019).

Building the GISP

When multinational companies use standard systems in their various business units, they hope to achieve efficiency through process integration (Haddara, 2018). In larger organizations, standardization is more important than local and individual needs (Davison et al., 2019). Local units often use IT solutions that are not integrated with central systems to respond more quickly to local specificities; however, this decision generates a long-term technical debt, which is usually challenging to address (Keller et al., 2019).

With the increasing complexity of organizational environments, IT projects form part of programs to build broader GISPs and are usually linked to

the organization's strategic objectives. Part of the problem regarding adopting global solutions is the parent company's position in forcing the pure replication of pre-defined central solutions without allowing for solutions that already meet local needs (Davison et al., 2019). Consumer perceptions and expectations of technology solutions increasingly influence corporate activities, and the more closely IT applications can be aligned with the expectations of customers and employees, the more likely they are to be adopted and used (Gregory et al., 2018).

The comprehensiveness of a global system's functionalities in all locations where it is used can be considered the most important factor when choosing the solution to implement, ahead of other aspects such as technical criteria, costs, reliability, and compatibility. The greater completeness of a technological solution allows for greater adaptation to the organization's most critical processes (Haddara, 2018). IT-related organizational performance is also directly linked to the operational alignment between IT and business (Wagner et al., 2019).

Contributions of local IT teams to GISP building

The most critical stage when structuring a GISP involves defining the applications that will make up this scenario. Failure to do this can lead to erroneous cost estimates and an inability to deliver what was promised (Hintsch et al., 2018). In a spin-off process, assertively defining the scope is essential, given the short contractual time to complete the replacement systems (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010). As an aggravating factor, the GISP will be built by IT teams with less experience with the legacy solutions since the employees tend to remain with the parent company, and much of the prior knowledge is tacit, meaning that it is hard to transfer (Alaranta & Martela, 2012).

Local teams' participation and engagement can help bridge this knowledge gap (Keller et al., 2019). Allocating IT teams among business units more evenly creates less inequality in the IT resources available to the organization (Choi et al., 2021). Expanding individual competitive competencies increases the company's collective competence (Ying et al., 2018). Thus, a potential contribution from local IT teams is their participation in the construction of the GISP by taking advantage of employees who are already available in the organization (Gurbaxani & Dunkle, 2019) to replace people who remained with the parent company and who had knowledge of legacy IS (McConnell & Walker, 2019). As a result, there is a less centralized

and more globalized vision regarding the definition of the GISP (Cheng et al., 2018) and less technical IT debt that needs to be supported by collaborative environments with the parent company (Keller et al., 2019; Kleehaus et al., 2020; Pang & Hahn, 2020) that help in building the strategy between IT and business by facilitating a scenario creation of engagement, trust and information sharing (Keller et al., 2019; Mysore et al., 2019; Ying et al., 2018). Based on the above discussion, we developed our first proposition as follows:

- **P1:** In a demerged unit, the local IT team can contribute to the composition of global project teams when building the post-spin-off GISP.

Several studies have recognized that operational alignment between IT and business, in its various dimensions, is essential for organizational competitiveness (Wagner et al., 2019). Technological innovations can facilitate the reformulation or reorientation of business models (Muehlburger et al., 2019). However, they can also pose threats if they do not allow for efficient adaptation to processes that are already in place (Pabst Von Ohain, 2019).

The orientation of companies to the processes favors collective cooperation (Cheng et al., 2018), as the IS maintains its scope in terms of supporting local processes (Haddara, 2018) and adherence to existing local specificities (Pabst Von Ohain, 2019), thereby sustaining the alignment between IT and business (Wagner et al., 2019) and the adoption of IS throughout the organization (Haddara, 2018). This strengthens corporate competitiveness (Mukai & Negoro, 2018), which is particularly necessary when rebuilding the company after the spin-off. In this context, we can consider that the result of participation by the local IT teams in the project, due to their prior knowledge and relationship with the business areas, tends to be positive (Brown & Brandt, 2014; Keller et al., 2019). Based on this idea, we developed our second proposition:

- **P2:** In a demerged unit, the local IT team can contribute to supporting the local business requirements for building the post-spin-off GISP.

Contribution of the GISP to post-spin-off corporate goals

Building a new GISP removes functionalities only relevant to the parent company's business vertical from the scope of technological solutions. This allows for a stronger focus on the new company's strategy (Bennett & Feldman, 2017), in addition to supporting some of the objectives of the

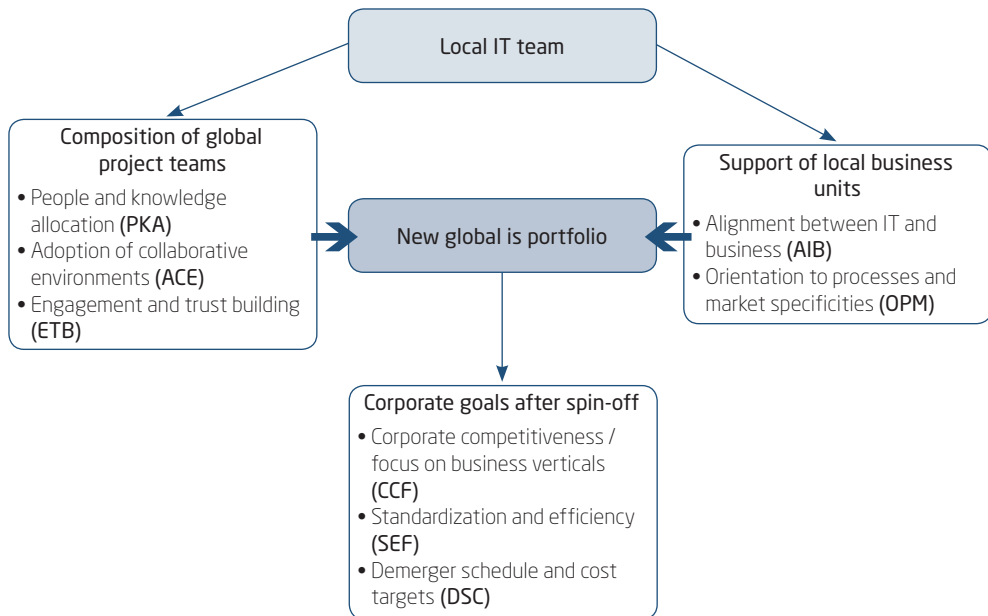
spin-off project, such as the specific strategies of the new organization, reducing excessive business diversification (Bennett & Feldman, 2017), and lowering the cost of systems governance and coordination (Wallin, 2012). The local IT team can help ensure that certain practices that bring competitive advantages at the local level are not lost (Haddara, 2018) and reduce redundant information and functions (Nissen & Von Rennenkampff, 2017) so that the spun-off unit can sustain its competitiveness in the market (Mukai & Negoro, 2018) through its perception of local needs that are unknown to the headquarter.

A significant advantage of building a GISP is the reduction in complexity resulting from using numerous systems within the organization (Mocker & Boochever, 2020). This complexity generates additional operating expenses, and its potential reduction can be considered a significant attraction in the decision to replace legacy systems (McConnell & Walker, 2019). This decision also offers an opportunity to unify data sources, thereby improving business efficiency and minimizing the risk of information redundancy (Ketinger et al., 2019).

Separating as soon as possible from the parent company is very important for the demerged unit, as this allows it to reduce costs related to the TSA and to focus on the strategy of its business verticals. For this reason, maintaining the schedule for the spin-off process becomes more significant than other projects (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010; Leimeister et al., 2012). A key aspect of this is the correct allocation of IT resources. In this context, local IT teams can make a substantial contribution to GISP building by replacing the people who left the spun-off unit (or who remained in the parent company) (McConnell & Walker, 2019), thereby filling knowledge gaps and minimizing external hiring costs, with a direct impact on costs and schedule control (Fossum et al., 2020). Based on this discussion, we can draw up our third proposition:

- **P3:** In a demerged unit, local IT teams can support the GISP building process and contribute to achieving the corporate goals expected from the spin-off.

Figure 1 illustrates our propositions related to the contributions of local IT teams, which arise from the theoretical framework and form the basis for our research.

Figure 1***Proposals related to contribution factors*****METHODOLOGY**

This study aimed to identify the contributions that an IT team allocated to a subsidiary of a multinational company can make to a spin-off process in which this company is involved as a demerged unit. We opted for a single case study, as this was particularly suited to the purpose of this work (Creswell et al., 2007), and a qualitative methodology, as this lends itself to explanatory questions and propositions based on actual phenomena (Crowe et al., 2011; Rashid et al., 2019). This approach allowed us to portray the perspectives and opinions of the participants of this study in terms of recognizing a particular phenomenon in which they are participating (Rashid et al., 2019; Yin, 2016) and to gain a better understanding of complex phenomena and specific configurations (Eisenhardt, 1989) by analyzing their impact on the evidence collected from the actual situation (Crowe et al., 2011; Yin, 2016) of delimited units, such, for instance, the investigation of one or more companies (Schoch, 2019).

The selected organization was a secular multinational of European origin in the automotive sector, which underwent a spin-off of its main business verticals. This company was a deliberate choice, made through intentional sampling (Schoch, 2019; Yin, 2016) from a subsidiary in Brazil of a demerged business unit, considering its uniqueness and the events in which it was involved.

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews to capture the research participants' perspectives without limiting each respondent's contextual conditions (Rashid et al., 2019; Yin, 2016). We used a script containing open questions, intending to outline the scope and bring congruence to the interviews (Schoch, 2019) while offering the researcher the freedom to pose questions according to the context of each interview, which allowed a wider range of perceptions to be considered in the analysis (Yin, 2016).

For the interviews, we selected 10 professionals working in the IT department of the case study company, all of whom held some leadership position (managers and analysts cell leaders) and who were drawn from all the local IT areas involved in the process of defining and building the new GISP after the spin-off. The interviews were conducted individually online, and the content was recorded for later analysis, with an average duration of one hour for each interview. All content was digitally transcribed for later use. The interviews followed a minimum organization to ensure alignment among all interviewees, who had the freedom to introduce their own concepts and distinct arguments to assess the events under study, with the researcher later interpreting them within the context to be analyzed (Yin, 2016). In the analysis, we sought to follow the phases defined by Yin (2016), namely compilation, decomposition, and recomposition of data, interpretation, and conclusion. ATLAS.ti software was used as a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS) tool to structure the collected data.

To ensure the confidentiality of the interviewees and to provide greater transparency for the process, their identities were anonymized, and they are referred to here, as shown in Table 1. Due to the internal policies of the company under evaluation, we encountered restrictions in terms of access to additional documents that could support data triangulation; however, given the objective of the study, it was considered that the scope of the interviewees' activities in the spin-off process, as well as the effectiveness of their participation in the interviews, were sufficient to demonstrate the expected research results.

Table 1
List of interviewees

Name	Role/department	Experience in the company
Executive 1	Manager / Digital workplace	More than 15 years
Executive 2	Manager / Systems development	More than 15 years
Executive 3	Manager / System development	More than 25 years
Executive 4	Manager / IT infrastructure	More than 15 years
Executive 5	Manager / IT governance	More than 20 years
Executive 6	Manager / System development	More than 5 years
Executive 7	Manager / System development	More than 30 years
Executive 8	Manager / System development	More than 30 years
Analyst 1	Celi leader / System development	More than 15 years
Analyst 2	Celi leader / Information security	More than 30 years

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

All interviewees confirmed that they were impacted by the spin-off process, which supported the expected results in an instrumental case study (Crowe et al., 2011). The matrix in Table 2 represents the number of times each interviewee mentioned, at least once, some contribution of their own or their team related to each of the contribution factors.

Table 2
General perceptions of the contributing factors from the interviewees' perspective

	Composition of global project teams			Support for local business units		Corporate goals after spin-off			Total
	ACE	PKA	ETB	AIB	OPM	CCF	DSC	SEF	
Executive 1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Executive 2	*	*		*	*		*	*	6
Executive 3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8

(continues)

Table 2 (conclusion)
General perceptions of the contributing factors from the interviewees' perspective

	Composition of global project teams			Support for local business units		Corporate goals after spin-off			Total
	ACE	PKA	ETB	AIB	OPM	CCF	DSC	SEF	
Executive 4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Executive 5	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Executive 6	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Executive 7	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Executive 8	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Analyst 1		*	*	*	*	*		*	6
Analyst 2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8
Total	9	10	9	10	10	9	9	10	76

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the ATLAS.ti results.

It was found that the local IT teams were essential for covering the personnel gaps resulting from the parent company’s loss by taking advantage of the technical talent already available in the organization (Gurbaxani & Dunkle, 2019). The local IT team’s performance was important for a more uniform distribution of available resources (Choi et al., 2021) and for asser-tive analyses defining the scope of global solutions.

Contributing factors to the composition of global project teams

People and knowledge allocation (PKA)

In the process of building the new GISP, the central team took advantage of the availability and experience of local teams to contribute to the construction of collective competence (Ying et al., 2018) and identify local specificities to maintain corporate advantage (Haddara, 2018).

Now that the team is smaller, we see a need for the global team to consult us. [...] it was a necessity for the project, not only the work-force but (also) the lack of knowledge in our locality (Executive 4).

Adoption of collaborative environments (ACE)

Adopting collaborative environments (ACE) was necessary to ensure the efficient flow of this process, the exchange of experiences, and the construction of better and more comprehensive solutions.

It is an opportunity that we used in our joint process [...] as a main goal (to keep the schedule and costs under control), but also without missing the chance to seize opportunities, and using our expertise to make these improvements rather than just doing a ‘copy and paste’ (Executive 3).

Engagement and trust building (ETB)

The participation of local IT teams enabled the central team to understand local competencies better. These competencies form the basis for building trust and credibility and are important for considering local needs (Cheng et al., 2018; Zakaria, 2017). This situation resulted in a more effectively used and engaged local IT team, an important outcome that promotes talent retention due to increased corporate loyalty (Dwivedi et al., 2006).

I think it’s a matter of credibility—the representative of the central team knows, he realises that you know what you’re talking about. You’re not coming with arguments or excuses just to avoid doing [something]. He can understand from the facts that you have credibility in relation to what you’re talking about (Executive 5).

[...] When you bring this responsibility to a local team to take care of [...] I saw that in the team, the engagement of the people increased just from them having this responsibility (Executive 1).

Contributing factors to the support for local business units

Alignment between IT and business (AIB)

The local IT team was highly relevant to aligning with the business and offering prior knowledge of needs and local technical requirements. This was reflected in the technical and functional support provided to the global teams and in the assistance and clarification of the business areas, enabling quicker adoption of the implemented solutions (Gregory et al., 2018).

With this spin-off, we did a powerful job to be able to explain, to be able to publicize what would be changed, what would have an impact—so yes, we work very closely with the business areas (Executive 1).

Orientation to processes and market specificities (OPM)

Guidance from the local IT team on business processes enabled collaboration with the global IT team (Brown & Brandt, 2014). This was essential so that attention was paid to local specificities and integration with local solutions to avoid a negative impact on business efficiency (Davison et al., 2019; Haddara, 2018).

It is impossible for the central area to have a view of the particular business processes in each locality [...], so they really need the local IT team (Analyst 2).

When you start to delve into the application itself, you begin to encounter the specificities, and that is why the global team is often caught by surprise by a need for customization and adaptation (Executive 2).

It was observed that there was a strong dependence of the local business on the availability and knowledge of the local IT team, including as a bridge with the central IT and business teams, as illustrated by the following quotes:

[...] The first area they always turn to in the face of a new demand is the local IT - at the very least, IT must be involved. There is always an expectation that someone from the local IT will be able to find a solution (Executive 7).

In this regard, the local IT team directly collaborates on adopting new IT solutions, which helps meet the expectations of the business areas and customers (Gregory et al., 2018).

Achievement of corporate goals after spin-off

Corporate competitiveness / Focus on business verticals (CCF)

Technology strongly supports business competitiveness (Muehlburger et al., 2019; Mukai & Negoro, 2018). The local IT team's availability and

experience supported the global project team's vision of local needs when choosing solutions, thereby bringing the expected benefits of increasing organizational competitiveness (Bennett & Feldman, 2017; Haddara, 2018) and focusing on the features relevant to the business reorientation (Leonhardt et al., 2017).

It's a huge challenge because the information is often unstructured [...]. This here is from the previous company, and this is from the new one—so it's a significant task that had to be done by the business areas with support and assistance from the local IT departments (Analyst 2).

The involvement of my team with the process knowledge was crucial for us to review all the workflows. Without this review, something would certainly be missing today, or in disagreement with the company separation rules (Executive 8).

Demerger schedule and cost targets (DSC)

The adoption of collaborative environments between the local IT team and the global team increased the agility of everyday GISP-building activities (Weritz et al., 2020). This was done by minimizing deviations in cost and implementation schedule by reducing the dependence on the central team and the need for third-party hiring and additional training (Fossum et al., 2020), thereby enhancing accuracy in selecting technological tools.

[With the local team supporting the project] there is a reduction in central services [...] then you can reduce costs (Executive 4).

There were many applications, and we had to follow the schedule. Each person has their own moment of action. When you involve an external person, you don't have time to explain everything, to explain the end-to-end process. If we had to explain, we wouldn't have time to complete it (Executive 2).

Standardization and efficiency (SEF)

The use of the local IT team facilitated cost reductions and complexity management (Guggenmos et al., 2019) by promoting synergy, simplifying the complexity of information (Kettinger et al., 2019), and eliminating func-

tional redundancies (Nissen & Von Rennenkampff, 2017). This contribution was further enhanced by the interaction between the local IT team and the staff in the various business areas (Mocker & Boochever, 2020), which supported the adoption of solutions and the clarification of local rules for the central team (Haddara, 2018).

When it comes to understanding the process, understanding the business, the internal IT team is important, and it's not enough to say, 'Okay, let's move or bring in a third party [...].' You need to have this knowledge of the business (Executive 5).

Challenges related to using the local IT team

When using local IT teams to build the GISP, there will naturally be conflicts with the other demands usually met by these teams. The conflicts that arise regarding allocating IT resources when executing parallel projects represent a significant challenge in managing IT demands, as they can cause over-allocation of these resources (Chilton, 2014) and overloading (Hoffmann et al., 2017). In turn, this can cause adverse effects on the people involved, for example, via technological stress (Heymann et al., 2020) and for local business areas, for example, due to delays in agreed deliveries (Hoffmann et al., 2017). Therefore, senior management must align this possible impact on the local IT team's dedicated service with local business areas.

The deadline was strict, and we also obviously had competition with all the day-to-day work we have to do. So, it wasn't a project that was prioritised in terms of giving up on all the other projects that were already happening—it came on top of all the other projects. We had to deliver this one and all the others too (Executive 2).

Some people mentioned difficulties regarding conducting joint discussions and managing conflicts with the business areas and central IT teams; these may have arisen due to their inexperience in similar projects, given that the participation of the local team in global projects was not being highly explored. A balance between technical (hard) skills and interpersonal (soft) skills is vital for the successful implementation of the GISP (Wang et al., 2013). In some cases, interpersonal skills have an even more substantial weight than technical skills (Merhout et al., 2009). For this reason, local IT teams must be prepared to deal with conflicts resulting from projects with this characteristic.

I think you need to have a person who is open to having very good conflict management. They must be able to have this very good communication. You need to have a sense of urgency too. [...] I realised that a lack of these soft skills had an impact on some activities (Executive 2).

As facilitators in disseminating the spin-off process among local business areas, local IT teams need to be clear about the rules supporting the spin-off. Given this, there needs to be a strong alignment among the IT team regarding this awareness from the outset of their involvement in the process, which was not found in 100% of the cases reported in the interview.

I'm going to ask [a contact at the parent company] for information, because he knew this process well, but if he doesn't have a TSA he won't be able to support me with that any more. In information security, this implies that if the person is not properly aware, they can continue to reveal information. Because you leave friends there [...] who will be competitors. You can't put a firewall in people's heads [...]. So we must count on awareness (Analyst 2).

DISCUSSION

The spin-off process resulted in a considerable reduction in the IT teams in the new demerged unit. As a result, the participation of the local IT team already available in the organization was fundamental in the composition of the global team (Choi et al., 2021; Ying et al., 2018) and was even encouraged by central teams to make up for the loss of the knowledge retained in the parent company (McConnell & Walker, 2019). This enabled greater objectivity in the requirement analysis and, consequently, more agility regarding scope design and greater assertiveness in terms of deliveries (Hintsch et al., 2018), resulting in a more consistent adoption of new tools in the locality (Gregory et al., 2018).

As positive results were being obtained and deliveries were taking place as planned, there was a building of trust that resulted in a reduction in the barriers that existed before the spin-off process (Cheng et al., 2018), which were negatively impacting corporate agility and business results (Keller et al., 2019; Nissen & Von Rennenkampff, 2017). Local IT teams' more effective participation in the project stages created a feeling of belonging, impacting

people's engagement (Mysore et al., 2019; Weritz et al., 2020) and resulting in a virtuous circle with positive consequences.

Therefore, it is possible to conclude that the local IT team of the demerged unit contributed to the composition of global project teams and to support the local business requirements for building the GISP following the spin-off, thus confirming Propositions 1 and 2.

The technical and functional support from the local IT team enabled collaboration on the correct definition of the tools and functionalities that should make up the new GISP reduced complexity through the removal of functions that were no longer relevant after the spin-off (Bennett & Feldman, 2017), and helped to maintain competitiveness by identifying the functions with the most significant impact on the business (Mukai & Negoro, 2018). The local IT team also worked to identify possible integration synergies, eliminate redundancies, and clarify local particularities for the central teams, thus contributing to the standardization and efficiency of the new GISP (McConnell & Walker, 2019; Mocker & Boochever, 2020; Nissen & Von Rennenkampff, 2017). Finally, the participation of the local IT team in defining the new GISP helped to control corporate time and cost targets, which are important both in global projects and, more specifically, in the process of building a new company (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010; Fossum et al., 2020; Leimeister et al., 2012).

It was possible to prove that the local IT team, by supporting the construction of the GISP, contributed to achieving the corporate goals expected from implementing the spin-off, thus confirming Proposition 3.

It is important to mention some challenges that were encountered when using local IT teams, such as complaints from the local business areas due to changes in the prioritization of local demands (Hintsch et al., 2018), the overloading of local IT teams, which can generate technological stress (Heymann et al., 2020), and a lack of people on the local IT team with the soft skills needed to support the relationships characteristic of these demands (Merhout et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2013) and a clear awareness of the implications of the spin-off in terms of the relationship with the teams that remained with the parent company (Du & Tanriverdi, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the objectives of this research were achieved. The findings helped us understand the various problems faced by the demerged units in

building the GISP after the spin-off, which is an important aspect of the design of the new corporate identity. Our results proved that local IT teams can contribute to global teams, as described in the theoretical framework. As a theoretical contribution, this study was able to confirm that the actions taken to involve the local IT team helped with alignment, building trust and better efficiency in resource management, and increasing the engagement of the local IT and business areas, using a qualitative approach to validate the assumptions presented by Mysore et al. (2021). As a complement to the proposal of Böhm et al. (2010), it was possible to identify how professionals from the local IT team made significant additions to the global team in terms of GISP building, filling gaps in resources and capabilities that could act as differentiators in the spin-off success. The responses of the interviewees demonstrated that the effective participation of the local IT team in the GISP building was recognized as important by the new organization, thus empirically proving, as suggested by Schweizer and Lagerström (2020), the perception of a spin-off as an opportunity for positive change to be exploited by managers in the demerger process.

As a practical contribution, this work presents some suggestions and recommendations for the IT managers and leaders of the split units that will help in understanding the benefits of using local IT resources and may be relevant for negotiation and joint guidance with the global teams:

1. The global team responsible for the GISP building project must include local IT teams from the initial stages of the project to ensure assertiveness in the design phase.
2. Consideration should be given to using local IT teams as an alternative for composing the teams for the GISP building project. These are people who are already available in the organization, are already aligned with corporate values, and are likely to engage with the project when participating as part of the team.
3. It is recommended that the local IT team act as an intermediary with local stakeholders, such as business areas, partners, and suppliers. This will facilitate the breakdown of barriers and the adoption of new IS.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research may be complemented in the future by responses from the local business teams impacted by the spin-off processes. This study aims to confirm the IT teams' perceptions regarding topics in his study.

A complementary focus of future work may involve including central IT teams in multinational companies responsible for GISP building after the spin-off. This approach will enrich the current study by identifying the perceptions of these professionals regarding the role of local IT in the implementation of business units.

It may be possible to minimize the challenges associated with using local IT teams mentioned above with prior planning that considers clarifying and involving local IT teams as quickly as possible, with effective support from senior management, both at headquarters and in the local units involved. Future studies should explore these factors in more depth, including their possible impact on spin-off processes.

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