

Implementation of sustainable development in Borussia Dortmund GmbH&Co.KgA

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Abstract:

Purpose: The objective of this research is to provide information about the current situation as it pertains to the application of sustainable development in the Football enterprises Borussia Dortmund (BVB).

Design/methodology/approach: The first part of this research discusses some particular points of the business strategy and sustainability managing of Football enterprises Borussia Dortmund. To pursue this strategic goal, BVB is trying to increase the revenues and increase the business results and thus the value of the company in a sustainable manner. Borussia Dortmund management keeps its social responsibilities towards the fans, club members, the city of Dortmund, and the region in mind. We present social, ecological and economic impact of Borussia Dortmund activities. This paper combines the conclusions from secondary data analysis, content analysis of websites and the author's own empirical investigation based on a series of interviews.

Findings: Football enterprises function in the form of companies and have pursuing different purposes economic and social goals. In the structures of football enterprises Borussia Dortmund there exists departments Corporate Responsibility for still better implementation of sustainability goals in practice. BVB uses own sports and economics potential to assume responsibility, which is tied closely to Dortmund and the surrounding Ruhr region, and recognises sustainable development as a guiding principle at global level. Implementation strategies for sustainable development is a significant factor for increase competitive advantages of Borussia Dortmund.

Research and practical limitations/implications: This research highlights that sustainable development has to become a part of management strategies of football enterprises. The constitutive elements of social market economy had an influence on the functioning of football enterprises Borussia Dortmund. Projects realized under the social responsibility, that were undertaken by sport companies BVB, were strongly related to sports education, environmental protection, social exclusion. Sustainable development of Borussia Dortmund is an interesting case study for another football clubs (enterprises) in Europe, especially for Polish football clubs.

Originality/value: The author draws attention to the argument that the professional sport industry requires a unique and original sustainable development. Football enterprises have many opportunities to contribute to sustainable development. Need to be noticed that sustainable development is big chance for sports clubs to open new opportunities and chance to economic development also adding value of brand (BVB is one 12th place in ranking of the Football Brands in Europe and Number One in ranking of Germany Football Clubs).

Key Words: Borussia Dortmund, CSR, football enterprises, social market economy, sustainable development.

Introduction

At the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, the doctrine of ordoliberalism was emerged in Germany. The practical implementation of this doctrine took place after 1948, thanks to the social market economy (ger. "Soziale Marktwirtschaft"). According to ordoliberalism, enterprises were an important element of the free market economic system. The activities of enterprises contributed to increasing the welfare of the society. The market economy, on the other hand, was to serve people because people were at the center of economic processes (Erhard, 1990, pp. 169). The article formulates the following theses:

1. The Borussia Dortmund sports (football) enterprise carries out tasks resulting from the ordoliberal doctrine.
2. The pro-social activities undertaken by the Borussia Dortmund football company are not occasional and accidental, but result from previously formulated strategies and codes.
3. Borussia Dortmund implements the strategy taking into account sports, economic, social and environmental goals.

In order to verify the indicated theses, literature studies were carried out, which included the history of economic thought and the activity of sports (football) enterprises between 2000-2021. The collected material was then subjected to elemental, causal and logical analysis. The case study was carried out on the sports

enterprises Borussia Dortmund GmbH & Co. KgaA. In addition, based on an interview with a Marieke Köhler – Manager in the Department of Corporate Responsibility in Borussia Dortmund, the official position was presented regarding sustainable development and CSR.

Sustainably development and sports

Sustainable development has been defined in 1987 (point to it reports of Gro Harlem Brundtland – a Norwegian politician and doctor): „Sustainable development encompasses three dimensions: economic, environmental and social. Sustainable development refers to broader environmental and societal interests, rather than to the interests of specific organizations”. By standards of Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)– sustainable development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Vieweg, 2019, pp. 44). Nowadays, sustainable development covers four areas: economic, ecological, social and cultural (Herlyn, Lévy-Tödter, 2020, pp.84). The economics literature recognizes about business model oriented an sustainable development, can be focused on three important areas: the use of new technologies, solving social problems and implementing alternative management paradigms (Jackson 2013, pp. 171-177, Rogall, 2010, pp. 194-199, Wunder, 2017, pp. 123). However, sustainable development can be considered a problem whose solution requires action by modern society to find the necessary solutions. Sustainable development, understood as modernization, should serve to renew the capitalist economy and adapt to new conditions, especially ecological (Neckel, Besedovsky, Boddenberg, Hasenfratz, Pritz, Wiegend, 2018, pp. 13,16).

Yunus writes about the special role of enterprises in saving humanity. Host operators should act ethically and responsibly so as not to contribute to the destruction of the natural environment. A special type of Social Business is that it does not only seek to maximize profit, but also wants to achieve the flexibility and freedom in experimenting with new forms of action to improve and repair the environment. Freedom from market expectations and the constant need to make a profit enables Social Business to devote itself to the goals of protecting the common, global goods – our universal earth by caring for clean air, water, land and other resources. Social Business Firms have unlimited possibilities and ways to creatively contribute to sustainable development (Yunus, 2018, pp. 110,111).

Corporate sustainability responsibility does not arise in a vacuum. It results from development processes, innovation, activity and creativity that took place inside a given economic entity. In a sustainable enterprise, economic success may take place through voluntary environmental and social initiatives (Altenburger, 2013, pp. 21, 28).

Sports clubs are historically rooted in the cities. Each club has the conditions and possibilities to influence the local community. With its activities, a sports club can and should have a positive impact on social integration. Attention is drawn to the fact that sports clubs are a specific role model and their attitudes influence the functioning of society. In the German strategic document Agenda 2030, sport is mentioned as enabler sustainable development. Sport in supports peaceful coexistence, tolerance, respect and contributes to the empowerment of women and young people. In addition, sport plays a role in achieving the goals of sustainable development, promoting health and social inclusion (Hildebrandt, 2019, pp. 3,4, Taticchi, Carbone, Albino, 2013, pp. 4,5).Corporate Social Responsibility is a practical implementation of the essence of a sports club, which goes to very "fertile soil" and an area, where there is a great potential for growth. It gives new impulses and opens up opportunities for clubs. Activities for sustainable development will be a key challenge for humanity in the 21st century. And in this process, sports clubs should not be missing. Taking up actions for sustainable development by clubs opens up new opportunities and development opportunities for them. A sports club can benefit from this by becoming a more modern entity. (Grabowski, 2020a, pp. 71,72, Hildebrandt, 2019 pp. 69,71,72).

Social Market Economy and responsibility of enterprises

Ordoliberalism is a doctrine, from which the German economic system is derived. The material from which the foundation of the ordoliberal system was builds, constitutes and regulates principles (Eucken, 1990, pp. 160-178). These principles created the economic constitution of ordoliberalism. Amid the constitutional principles, there were, among others: the principle of responsibility. It was considered important for the functioning of order in the competition. According to Walter Eucken, business owners and management were obliged to take responsibility for their decisions regarding the disposal of capital and for investment. According to Wilhelm Röpke, the market economy did not function in an anthropological vacuum, but within strictly defined frameworks set by norms and values (Röpke, 1950, pp. 18,19). Economic humanism in modern capitalism could not exist properly without solid foundations, such as responsibility, solidarity, social integration, justice and cooperation. Running a business requires having appropriate personal qualities, in which Röpke included among others: self-discipline, justice, reliability, honesty, social awareness and respect for human dignity. According to Alfred Müller-Armack, the enterprise in the social market economy was a community of people employed in it. Economic entities operate in a specific legal order and bear responsibility for their actions. Managers, leading enterprises in a market economy, were obliged to be responsible to society. Activities carried out by economic entities were also to be focused on providing support to vulnerable social

groups. The struggle with inequalities took place in the specific conditions created by the social market economy (Grabowski, 2018, pp. 168,169, Müller-Armack, 1981, pp. 118, Müller-Armack, 2003, pp. 39).

Borussia Dortmund and sustainable development

Borussia Dortmund was founded on 19th December 1909, and its name referred to the brewery located in the city, "Borussia Brauerei". Dortmund was a city in which, apart from numerous breweries, there was a well-developed heavy industry (mining, metallurgy), and geographically belonged to the Ruhr District ("Ruhrgebiet"). The activity of this club was in line with the local social and cultural life. BVB does not forget about its historical roots. On the 110th anniversary of the club's establishment, a special series of T-shirts was released to the market, referring to the industrial character of the city and the region. "Coal & Steel – deeply rooted in our home") has become part of Borussia Dortmund "s tradition conscious message of "Past. Present. Future ".

Since 2000, the shares of BVB have been listed on the Frankfurt am Main stock exchange (shareholding structure: free float 69.86%, Evonik Industries 9.83%, Bernd Geske 9.35%, Borussia 09 e.V. Dortmund 5.53%, Signal Iduna 5.43%), and the company's market capitalization is EUR 520.72 million (as of 5th March, 2021). According to FMR, the actual value of the club is EUR 1.104 billion, including: 50 million sponsorship agreement with firm 1 & 1, 232 million EUR agreement with Sport Five, 234 million EUR value of the club's brand, 235 million EUR stadium and 352 million EUR market value of footballers (Frankfurt Main Research 2020).

In the Borussia Dortmund enterprises there are five independent functional areas: Sports; Sales and Marketing, Digitalisation; Communication; Organization; Finance and Facilities. Borussia Dortmund holds equity investments in following companies: BVB Stadionmanagement GmbH (100% of shares), BVB Event & Catering GmbH (100%), BVB Fussballakademie GmbH (100%), BVB Merchandising GmbH (100%), BVB Asia Pacific Pte Ltd (100%), Besttravel Dortmund GmbH (100%) and Orthomed Medizinisches Leistungs- und Rehabilitationszentrum GmbH (33.33%). The business profile of these companies includes: a) operation and management of the Signal Iduna stadium and a museum facility, b) production and distribution of goods with the BVB brand, c) organization of mass events and catering, d) provision of services.

The business strategy of the BVB concern included four main goals: 1) Sustainable adjusting athletic prospectus; 2) Intensifying the promotion of up-and-coming talent; 3) Increasing fan involvement; 4) Utilising and maintaining the Borussia Dortmund brand [Grabowski, 2015,p. 73]. Primary Stakeholders Group of Borussia Dortmund are: Fans, Club Members, Sponsors, Media, City of Dortmund, Employees, Neighbours, Vendors, Associations and Shareholders. The motto of BVB's activity was: to maximize sports success without increasing financial debt (Grabowski, 2019, pp. 177). At the same time, the BVB concern aims to increase revenues, operating profit and increase the value of the enterprise. Another important area was awareness of social responsibility towards fans (Borussia Dortmund have 952 fan clubs including 150 fan clubs worldwide. More than 2000 fans at every away match), fan club members (64 000 Person), city and region, and environmental protection (Grabowski, 2019c, p. 125). The Club employed 879 Persons (of which 55% on a permanent basis and 45% were temporary staff – as at 30th June 2020).

During the reporting period (1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020) Borussia Dortmund KgaA generated sales of EUR 442,126 thousand (previous year: EUR 446,030 thousand). Income from TV Marketing EUR 169,836 thousand, Transfer deal EUR 123,732 thousand, Advertising EUR 98,038 thousand, Match operations EUR 32,51 thousand, Conference, catering, miscellaneous EUR 18,01 thousand. Borussia Dortmund generated a net loss of EUR 49,662 thousand – previous year: net income of EUR 25,884 thousand (Borussia Dortmund, Geschäftsbericht 2019/2020, p. 48).

Values of the BVB:

„1) Staying hungry – We want to rank among the world's elite clubs and will therefore never rest. We roll up our sleeves and give nothing less than 100%.

2) Tenacity – We don't like to give in. When we set our minds to doing something, we do it. We're fuelled by our common goals and our faith in our united strength.

3) Humility – With our Westphalian roots deeply entrenched in the Ruhr region, our home is where we belong. Performance, not the packaging, is what counts for us. We work hard and we celebrate our successes together – with our friends and family” (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 107).

Borussia Dortmund – Case Study

At the beginning of 2017, an internal evaluation of 53 thematic areas related to the activities of BVB was performed according to GRI standards. Evaluation and selection led to define to 25 material sustainability topics Sustainability topic was defined in an intensive stakeholder dialogue. Topics in 6 area: 1) Athletic development, 2) Fans, Club members and society, 3) Economic approach, 4) Environmental responsibility, 5) Employees, 6) Product responsibility. From 25 sustainability topics are the seven highlighted Topics by criteria Significance of the economic, ecological and social impacts and Impact on stakeholder decisions and assessments: I) Peak performance by Athletic development, II) Fan community and fan behaviour; III) Diversity and anti-discrimination, IV) Media and social networks, V) Compliance and risk management, VI) Occupational

health and safety, VII) Spectator safety. Individual high-priority risks have Borussia Dortmund classified for 2019/2020 season. Following high-priority risks relate to the sustainability: Financial planning dependent on sporting success (peak performance); Loss of the player base due to travel and other accidents or terrorist attacks (peak performance); Periods during which professional players are unable to play (peak performance); The risk that key players might switch clubs (peak performance); Interruptions to match operations (peak performance); Player salary levels (peak performance); Increasing fan violence /defamations and insults (fan community and fan behaviour); Right-wing extremism (diversity and anti-discrimination); Outbreak of epidemics/pandemics (Occupational health and safety/spectator safety); Cost of providing security at home matches (spectator safety); Potential stadium catastrophes (spectator safety); Structural defects to SIGNAL IDUNA PARK (spectator safety); Consequential damage arising from mining (spectator safety); Social media/social networks (media and social networks); Protecting confidential information (compliance and risk management); Financial Fair Play – compliance and risk management (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 153).

Selected actions of BVB for sustainable development:

- The basic social role of a sports club is to educate and train young football adepts at the training center. To remain competitive on the market requires constant investments, therefore a modern training center was built for the amount of EUR 20 million.
- The key fixed asset and necessary for the functioning of the club from Dortmund is the stadium. Hence, numerous investments are made in this facility: a) in stadium lighting - LED and implementation of the DIN ISO 50001 energy management system, b) energy in which the stadium is supplied with 100% ecological electricity - on the roof of the stadium since 2011 for the amount EUR 1.9 million solar panels were installed (annual production is 467,000 kWh (reducing CO₂ emissions by 230 tonnes) and is sent to the municipal network. All other club buildings (training facilities, football academy, offices) use green energy. Borussia Dortmund made the switch 99.8% of its electricity form renewable energy. In 2014, BVB teamed up with partner LichtBlick to launch „Strom09" project. The idea was for BVB and its fans to reduce CO₂ emissions and the resources we consume by one tonne of CO₂ for each seat in the stadium. Reducing CO₂ emissions by 5,000 tonnes – was reached in September 2014, the second (25,000 tonnes) in February 2015, and the third (68,600 tonnes) in July 2018. The final goal of the project – to reduce CO₂ emissions by 81,365 tonnes, the equivalent of one tonne per seat – was met at the end of 2019 (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 66). In addition, the club offers ecological electricity for sale, the so-called Strom 09, from a hydroelectric power plant. A fixed monthly fee of 9.09 EUR and 26.99 eurocents for the use of 1 kWh. by BVB during the football season in the 1. Bundesliga, the customer receives a credit card in the amount of 1 kWh.
- The stadium is also a place of education where a nationwide project for children and youth is carried out in the form of workshops on such issues as: anti-mobbing, career counseling, social integration, intercultural dialogue, social inequalities, civil courage, teamwork, right-wing extremism, personal development, prevention violence, healthy lifestyle. Financial support is provided by the Robert Bosch Foundation (each center receives EUR 50,000 annually), and the substantive support is provided by the Political Research Center from Munich.
- BVB works together with the Kompetenzgruppe Fankultur und Sport bezogene Sozial Arbeitresearchgroup and other parties to promote diversity in the stadium. BVB Stadium it is the place for work for Project against the discrimination. „Changing the Chants" is Project founded by the European Union and is a co-operation between the Anne Frank House, Borussia Dortmund, Fare Network and Feyenoord Rotterdam and aims to find methods to counter anti-Semitic chants during football matches in Europe (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 55).
- Borussia Dortmund dicta compliance and product safety during the manufacturing process. External service provider: a DAkkS-accredited testing institute tests all products to ensure that our products do not contain hazardous chemicals (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 131).
- The "Stadiondeckel" electronic payment card and additionally at the beginning of the 2019/2020 season were mobile payment methods Google Pay and Apply Pay at All 160 kiosks at Signal Iduna Park Stadium (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 79).
- From February 2020, all half-litre cold beverages were served in a reusable polypropylene (PP) container. In The away fan area was The use of disposable containers made from 100% recycled PET bottles – rPET containers. Any unavoidable food waste is then transported to a nearby biogas plant for recycling. (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, pp. 70, 138).
- Cooperation with regional partners: a) merchandising – 79% of food vendors based in Germany, b) event and catering – 80% of food vendors based in Nordrhein Westfalen (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 151).
- Borussia Dortmund expand e-charging infrastructure. 9 charging stations is available: at the stadium, at the FanWelt service centre and in Training Center Brackel (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 69).

In the summer of 2019, the Corporate Responsibility area was transformed into a company department with objective to coordinate the process of continual improvement in relation to BVB's key social, corporate and ecological issues (Grabowski 2020b, p 99). This department deals with matters related to sustainable development, but also with the functioning of the BVB "Leuchte auf" Foundation. Foundation was formed 2012 by Borussia Dortmund and its objective is to support charitable project through financial or intellectual contributions. The four pillars of Foundation working are: 1) Future – Creating opportunities; 2) Diversity – Communicating values, promoting tolerant coexistence; 3) Commitment – Volunteering together; 4) Health – Protecting our most value asset. Since 2012, the foundation has implemented a total of 158 projects for the amount of EUR 1.14 million. Foundation supported 33 project and 380 000 EUR donations received in 2019/2020 season (Borussia Dortmund, Sustainability Report 2019/2020, p. 114).

Borussia Dortmund official statement to sustainable development

Marieke Köhler (Team Lead Sustainability Borussia Dortmund, Manager of Foundation „Leuchte auf“): Awareness „Borussia Dortmund is aware of its responsible role when it comes to sustainable issues. In our CSR work and sustainable development, it is particularly important to us that we consider and deal with these issues holistically. We always take into consideration the economic, ecological and social dimensions. Admittedly, we began to deal intensively with this when the reporting requirement for listed companies was introduced in Germany.

Of course, we created the report based on the specifications, but we also wanted to deal with the sustainable development of the club beyond that and formed a working group that dealt intensively with the sustainability report.

In doing so, we had to analyze exactly which topics and work areas are important for both BVB and external parties and therefore need to be mentioned in the report.

In a long process, this working group identified the most important areas within BVB and had to work out a structure that encompasses all areas.

The areas we have identified in which we want to develop sustainably are constantly checked and further developed by Stakeholders, a internal working group and the CR department. We focuses on the implementation of the company's strategic goals in connection with sustainable development”.

Society

„Even though we are a listed company, we are also a football club to which its fans are particularly important. Therefore, in every activity we plan, we think of our fans first. This sets us apart from other companies because these companies serve customers and have no fans. This close relationship between BVB and its fans also means that our club has a special impact on people and the society. This gives us the great advantage that we can not only initiate changes within the company with sustainable topics, but can also sensitize a divers group of the society - our fans - to these topics.

Our goal is to achieve a comprehensive picture of sustainable development. To this end, we deal with economic, ecological and social sustainability. On the one hand, it is, of course, a matter of complying with the regulations and laws, but also, going much further, of promoting these very important issues for our society. For example, if our measures are not aimed at being „green”, one day we will have problems with regulations and laws and we would also lose relationships with our other stakeholders. We know that we can reach society with our message in a different way than traditional companies, but also educational and social institutions. For a club/company like BVB, it is important to take responsibility and use values to support them in their education”-

Advantages „First and foremost, we are not concerned with competitive advantages that we want to achieve, but rather we founded the CR department because we are convinced that these issues are of enormous importance. However, we believe that sustainable measures create competitive advantages. Especially in the future, associations that do not work in this way, do nothing in the field of sustainable development, will not have difficulties in the future. For example, the prices for the consumption of natural resources (raw materials) continue to rise. We do not want to compare ourselves with other clubs or compete with them in this area. Every club has different conditions and situations. Due to the mandatory reporting for us, we might be one step ahead - we have our own department and we are working very actively on it. On the other hand, activities in the field of sustainable development are also gaining in importance in connection with their acceptance by stock market investors. We are on the right track, the topic of sustainable development is almost endless - there is always something new to do. We can always get better”. CSR goals We have a lot to do in the field of ecology. Groundwork - collecting data, but also architectural and construction challenges in the context of, for example, our stadium. This year we have set ourselves goals in the area of resource use and mobility. In terms of social sustainability and workforce, I can say that we are already on the right track. Ideas „Ideas come not only from the Corporate Responsibility division, but also from colleagues and fans. In the area of ecology, we want to take further steps now. As part of the reporting process, we identified 25 material topics on which we report. We then transferred these 25 essential topics into six fields of action and then developed seven main areas of work from them:

- The stadium and its surroundings
- Holistic personnel development

- Securing top athletic performance
- Promotion of young talent
- BVB, its fans and the region
- Environmental responsibility
- Organization, quality and service

We want to achieve climate neutrality and manage resources sensibly. Above all, of course, it is the sporting successes that are important to us and facilitate access to our target groups (stakeholders). Another important issue for us is the health of our employees. Our goal is first to convince all employees of the importance of sustainable development, and only then, when we have completed our own tasks, can we get our messages across.

CSR has become part of Borussia Dortmund's DNA. makes us a great club with an impact on the city and the region that has no problem filling the stadium with 80,000 fans every two weeks. We observe the benefits of CSR in business as well as for society”.

Vision 2030 BVB

„We want to achieve climate neutrality. Preferably earlier than in 2050 (Germany's national strategy for sustainable development). We aim to be faster and more ambitious in this challenge. We want to deepen our connection to the city, the region and our global presence at the same time. We also try to implement our international sustainability strategy”.

Conclusions

The aim of the social market economy was to maintain a balance between the ideals of justice, freedom and economic growth. The constitutive elements of social market economy had an influence on the functioning of football enterprises Borussia Dortmund. Projects realized under the social responsibility, that were undertaken by sport companies BVB, were strongly related to sports education, environmental protection, social exclusion. The professional sport industry requires a unique and original sustainable development. Football enterprises have many opportunities to contribute to sustainable development. Need to be noticed that sustainable development is big chance for sports clubs to open new opportunities and chance to economic development also adding value of brand.

In contrast, public responsibility also applies to the activities of the professional sport, football in particular. Football enterprises function in the form of companies and have pursuing different purposes economic and social goals. In the structures of football enterprises Borussia Dortmund there exists departments Corporate Responsibility for better implementation of sustainability goals in practice. BVB uses own sports and economics potential to assume responsibility, which is tied closely to Dortmund and the surrounding Ruhr region, and recognises sustainable development as a guiding principle at global level. Implementation strategies for sustainably development is a significant factor for increase competitive advantages of Borussia Dortmund in local and international dimension.

Conflicts of interest: there is no conflict of interest

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