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Business Ethics in Harmonization of Society Life

Abstract: *Introduction.* Business ethics is one of the most pressing problems for societies with a developed market economy. Its emergence is driven by the growing influence of business on political, economic, and socio-cultural processes, the vector of which is not necessarily favorable for humanity, especially today, when business is moving to the global level, and national social structures remain at the local level. *Purpose and methods.* The purpose of the article is to substantiate the theoretical principles of business ethics in the organization of society life, the use of which will provide an opportunity to integrate into the system of public and private administration of the ethical component and, on this basis, to harmonize the relationship between business and society. The methodological basis of the study is the dialectical principle of cognition, systemic, historical, and cultural approaches to the study of the interaction between business and society. *Results.* The socio-cultural sources, content, and forms of business ethics of “Service” are clarified: charity, philanthropy, economic development. The content of business ethics “Social Responsibility”, the scope and forms of its application, and current problems of ethical control have been determined. The moral prerequisites and ethical dimensions of business life are established, and the ways of maintaining business ethics in society are substantiated. *Conclusions.* The scientific novelty of the research results lies in the systemic and cultural deepening of the understanding of the essence, role, and importance of business ethics in the organization of society life. The significance of the study is revealed in the addition of science to new theoretical provisions on business ethics, as well as the possibility of using them in the process of training entrepreneurs and managers of business organizations.

Keywords: business ethics, society life, harmonization.

1. Introduction

The problem formulation. Business ethics problem is one of the most pressing for societies with a developed market economy. Its emergence is due to the increasing influence of entrepreneurship as a market society institution on the political, economic, and socio-cultural processes, the vector of which is not necessarily favorable for society as a whole. For the first time, this problem was sharply posed in the early twentieth century under mature capitalism conditions, while the main types of interaction between business and society and the corresponding concepts of social service and social responsibility were formed. Today, when entrepreneurship has moved to the global level and national societies and economies have remained at the local level, the business has a real opportunity to avoid not only taxes but also all other social commitments made earlier, the problem of social responsibility and business ethics, in general, has again become topical and acute. Its decision lies not in the declarations and appeals addressed to the big business but in the peculiarities of the entrepreneurship institute functioning due to the socio-cultural environment.

State study of the problem. The problem of forming and establishing business ethics community is the subject of research in a number of sciences: economics, political science, sociology, social philosophy, psychology, cultural studies and management, each of which studies various aspects of this complex socio-cultural phenomenon. The analysis of scientific literature allows us to identify three main approaches to solving this problem.

Theoretical principles of the first (narrow economic) approach are formulated by Nobel Laureate in Economics Milton Friedman (1968). The logic of this approach is as follows: since business organizations must serve the interests of their owners, and managers, after all, are only employees, their primary task is to conduct business according to the wishes of the owners. It follows that the true role of the business is to use its energy and resources to increase profits, provided that it follows the rules of the game, participates in open competition without resorting to fraud and deception. This business ethics concept is supported by such scholars as Frank Knight (1651), Adam Smith (1759), Jeremy Bentham (1826), Charles Peirce (1912), Max Weber (1905, 1925), Friedrich von Hayek (1944), Milton Friedman (1968) and others.

The second approach to business ethics was formed under the influence of Abraham Maslow (1943), Elton Mayo (1960), Robert Merton (1963), David Braybrooke (1989), Paul Hodapp (1994), Peter Drucker (1998), Michael Mescon (1998), Amitai Etzioni (2018) and others. The essence of this approach, according to P. Drucker (1970), is to recognize that the organization as a whole

has an ethical obligation to certain stakeholder groups. Stakeholders include founders, owners, managers, suppliers, creditors, customers, local communities, trade unions, government regulators, professional associations, and employees. This multi-layered social environment can significantly affect the achievement of the organization's goals. Therefore, the organization's management has to balance the internal purely economic goals with stakeholders' social, ethical, and economic interests. In practice, this approach is the most common.

The third approach is devoted to the problem of forming business ethics in today's business globalization. Works by foreign scholars such as Phillip Lewis (2017), Patrick O'Sullivan, Mark Smith and Mark Esposito (2012), Andrew Ghillyer (2009), Joseph Gilbert (2016), Stephen Byars and Kurt Stanberry (2018), Denis Collins (2018) are of great importance for understanding this problem. They develop a socio-ethical approach, according to which the owners and managers of the organization are responsible for the balanced observance of the common interests of the organization, the interests of stakeholders, and global public interests. This approach is also been developed by Ukrainian scientists (Abolina, 2012; Hrishnova, 2010; Kolot et al., 2010; Kovalenko, 2020a, 2020b, 2021; Kovalenko et al., 2019; Martynyshyn & Khlystun, 2018, 2019; Martynyshyn & Kovalenko, 2016, 2017, 2018a, 2018b; Martynyshyn et al., 2020a, 2020b; Palekha, 2009; Radchenko, 2014; Savchenko & Radchenko 2008), who argue that organizations should make voluntary commitments to society and direct part of their funds to improve it.

Along with the above-mentioned approaches to business ethics in the scientific literature, there is a relativistic position – the recognition that a person is unable and unwilling to decide what is good or evil. According to the relativistic approach, ethics is relative and depends on the personal, social, and other circumstances in which the individual and the organization find themselves. In addition to relativism, there are other ethical constructions, which, however, are not always in demand by modern business leaders.

Unresolved issues. The conducted analysis shows that the state of theoretical justification of business ethics today still looks quite modest. Questions about the origins of business ethics as a socio-cultural phenomenon are still poorly understood. The forms and areas of business ethics application, as well as ways of ethical control of the large business in today's globalized world, are understudied. There are many uncertainties about the moral prerequisites and ethical dimensions of business life and ways to maintain business ethics in today's cultural environment.

The relevance and importance of solving these issues have determined the purpose and objectives of our study.

2. Purpose and methods

The purpose and research tasks. The purpose of the article is to substantiate the theoretical foundations of business ethics in the organization of social life, the use of which will integrate into the system of public and private governance ethical components and on this basis harmonize the relationship between business and society.

Achieving this purpose involves solving the following tasks:

- to find out the socio-cultural origins, content, and forms of business ethics of “Service”: charity, philanthropy, economic development;
- to determine the content of “Social Responsibility” business ethics, the scope and forms of its application, and current problems of ethical control;
- to establish moral preconditions and ethical dimensions of business life and to substantiate the ways of maintaining business ethics in society.

Methodology and methods. The methodological basis of the study is the dialectical principle of cognition and systemic, historical, cultural approaches to the study of the interaction between business and society. Based on the dialectical principle of cognition, business and society are considered in the process of inseparable interconnection, constant development, and transformation. At the same time, emphasis is placed on the fact that the system of vital activity of society and business is a contradictory unity of political, economic, social, and ethical opposites that interpenetrate each other, while simultaneously being in a state of unity and struggle. The unity of opposites means that they are mutually conditioned, and the struggle means they are mutually exclusive. Their clashes and mutual struggle are a source of change, development, and self-development in this system. The struggle of opposing forces ultimately leads to the resolution of contradictions, which is the transition from the old to the qualitatively new state of the system.

Business ethics is studied from the standpoint of a systems approach, according to which it is a complex, open, dynamic, stochastic system, consisting of a set of interconnected and interacting parts, united by a common goal – to establish harmonious relationships and interact with society. At the same time, business ethics itself is an integral part of the higher-order system – the society and therefore is subordinate to it.

The historical approach allows studying the origin, formation, and development of business ethics in chronological order to identify its relationships and patterns, better understand their essence and predict possible development trends in the future.

The use of a culturological approach allows focusing on the axiological aspects of the relationship between business and society and this basis to comprehensively investigate this complex organizational and ethical problem.

The following methods were used in the research process: conceptual and analytical – to study and generalize the existing theoretical positions on the research problem; phenomenological – to reveal the content of business ethics; classifications – during the development of business ethics typology; comparative – when comparing different types of business ethics, establishing their similarities and differences; modeling – to predict possible trends in business ethics in the future; observation – during the collection of empirical data about the object of study; abstraction – to highlight the essential properties of business ethics; analysis and synthesis – in-depth study of business ethics nature and mechanisms of its management; theoretical generalization – to sum up.

Research information base. The information base of the research consists of scientific works of leading domestic and foreign scientists on the theory and history of entrepreneurial activity, business organization, and society. The results of the authors' research were used as an empirical substantiation of the main conceptual provisions of the business ethics phenomenon.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Business ethics: “Service”

The development of capitalist entrepreneurship and the gradual involvement of more and more people of various professions, nations, denominations, classes, and states led to its transformation into a powerful social force and the acquisition of the economy, an increasingly important role in society. Economic activity in the field of livelihood, which initially occupied a peripheral, subordinate place in the value hierarchy system of traditional culture, turned into a self-sufficient and self-valued industry that significantly influences politics, state system, and social life. At the same time, during the formation of mature industrial capitalism in the twentieth century, there was a problem with its relationship with society – the legitimation of the institutional foundations of capitalist entrepreneurship and business, gaining trust and prestige, optimizing interaction with the state, social, and political institutions.

The problem of interaction between the entrepreneurship institute and society should not be confused with the problem of its spiritual legitimacy as a process of maturing in the culture of specific values, norms, and behavior stereotypes that allow accepting this activity as worthy and moral. The interaction of business and society concerns the entrepreneurship institution, while its spiritual legitimation takes place at the personal level. It should be noted that the institutional and personal levels of capitalist entrepreneurship legitimation are interrelated: the more stable the spiritual prerequisites for individual entrepreneurship are, the sooner the harmonious interaction between business and society is established.

Socio-cultural tradition plays a decisive role in the relations system formation between business and society: it defines the place of business on the scale of socially significant values, economic activity status, the ratio between individual orientations, and values of solidarity and service to the public good. The dynamics of all these values and norms determine relationship forms between business as a socio-cultural subsystem and society as a whole.

The nature of the interaction between business and society varied through the different stages of capitalism development. Well-known American sociologist *Reinhard Bendix* (1968) identified two stages in the relationship formation between business and society. At the first stage of industrial capitalist production development, the main ideological and moral problem was its justification and legitimation in the eyes of society. At this stage, the moral ideology of business service is decisive. In the second stage, when entrepreneurship has become well established in society and gained the necessary prestige, there is a transition from its self-justification to the formation of ideas about the social responsibility of business.

Capitalism, as a new way of economic life, from the beginning of its existence, even in the presence of its deep socio-cultural legitimation in the form of Protestant ethics has met with condemnation in society. The reason for this was, first of all, the harsh exploitation of the mercenary workers, whose situation was initially significantly worse than the position of the traditional artisans or even peasants, and secondly, it generated fierce competition between the new class of entrepreneurs and traditional economic classes and political elites. Third, the most important reason for the weakness of social and moral legitimacy of the capitalist entrepreneurship institution in the era of its formation was its inseparable essential connection with the market, which resulted in the absolutization and universalization of market profitability as a basic principle of not only economic but also social relations in general. The emerging new social class was guided by itself and actively imposed on society the idea that everything is incapable according to the criteria of market efficiency – and these were social-mutual assistance and the development of science, arts, education, etc. – has no right to exist. Former solidarity and paternalistic structures, as well as an absolutist state, which previously used to bear a significant share of the costs of supporting the culture, disintegrated and lost their former capabilities. Therefore, the establishment of entrepreneurship as the dominant social class and the basic socio-economic institution coincided unprecedented decline in the welfare of the population, loss of social guarantees provided by former solidarity structures, deterioration of the moral climate, and increase of social contradictions. All this caused distrust in the new institution, which was expressed in the escalation of social conflicts, and the spread

of anti-capitalist ideology (including Marxism). Moral truth, and therefore both compassion and legitimacy remained in social groups opposed to entrepreneurship. While the economic and political capital of the new institution grew, the symbolic capital not only did not grow but concentrated on the opposite social pole. Consequently, legitimation, moral justification in the eyes of society, was the main socio-cultural problem of capitalist entrepreneurship activity and industrial development itself at the early stage of their formation. At the same time, there is a growing interest in the business in the moral legitimacy of its activities.

In countries with traditional values, where stable spiritual preconditions for capitalist entrepreneurship at the personal level did not develop well, the entrepreneurship institute had faced particularly complex problems in its relations with society. Here entrepreneurs were perceived as exploiters, accumulating their capital on the suffering and torment of the people. Traditional society could not accept their desire for independence and refused to see independent social power in business circles. Despite the growing economic potential, entrepreneurship remained in fact the third state. Another significant factor in the traditional society undermining the social status of business was the low value of economic success compared to spiritual and military merit. Another factor that devalues the symbolic capital of entrepreneurs is the ambiguous attitude of society to the choice of economic development path: many authoritative and influential public figures are convinced of the unsuitability of the industrial path and opposed it to the agricultural path. This approach was particularly typical for Slavophilian and populist thinkers, who linked the country's future with the peasant community, which in this case merged with large landowners whose interests were dominated by the country's agrarian development. The main argument of Slavophiles and populists against the industrial-capitalist development was that it leads to the proletarianization of large masses of the population, the collapse of traditional social structures, and the destruction of lifestyles and moral principles. Industrial capitalism opponents have argued that factory production can be replaced by traditional homemade handicrafts. The advantage of the latter they saw in that it is cheaper in its organization, does not require expensive machines and equipment, and most importantly – allows the use of traditional forms of labor, does not destroy the formed socio-economic ties and does not change the cultural image of the traditional worker.

Of course, in this regard, a significant part of society to factory production and industrial development in general, the activities of entrepreneurs were not perceived as socially useful. On the contrary, it suffered moral repression as purely selfish and exploitative, destroying social foundations. In this case, the only way to increase symbolic capital for entrepreneurs was to demonstrate the usefulness and importance of economic success for the entire society, its not selfish but broad social significance.

The most important factor in the development of entrepreneurship was the widespread idea of service in society, according to which each of the states has its own mission, its purpose in a single system of society's vital activity. Thus, in particular, the nobility was attributed to public and military service, the peasantry – ensuring the material basis of society, the clergy – religious salvation, the intelligentsia took on the mission of educational service to the people, and only trade and industry remained busy satisfying their selfish interests. For organic integration into society and the legitimization of its activities at the institutional level, it was necessary to find its place in the overall service system, and such a place served society, which took various forms.

Similar processes took place not only in traditional but also in industrially advanced countries. So, in the United States, the reasons for this crisis lay in the fact that with the emergence of large-scale industrial capitalism and the beginning of monopolization, the valuable principles of entrepreneurship have changed qualitatively. First of all, it began to lose the character of individual initiative, and the freedom of competition became increasingly limited by the inequality of market participants' opportunities. The growth of industrial giants was accompanied by the ruin of small businesses and the monopolization of entire industries, which led to the dictates of corporations in the lives of entire states. Thus, the consolidation and monopolization of capitalist production led to the undermining of its own social and socio-cultural basis – an independent producer and individual initiative in the market under free competition conditions. The development of large industrial capitalism contradicted its own values and morally legitimizing principles, formulated, in particular, as the ideologem of the “American Dream”: ideas about equal opportunities to achieve success, happiness, and prosperity for every member of society, about equal initial conditions of struggle for everyone who wants to join the subject. This caused a rapid spike in the antitrust movement that embraced all segments of society, including the liberal intelligentsia (Ghillyer, 2009). All of this required a new understanding of the value basis of big business, an explanation of its qualitatively new social role, and the search for a new tactic for its relationship with society.

Entrepreneurs took a dual position in society. On the one hand, they pursued their own interests, relying on the inviolable values of success, wealth, activity, and so on. In the United States, the idea of social Darwinism was used to justify the moral work of large entrepreneurs, which recognizes the struggle for existence in which the stronger survives. During the monopolies' formation, when the masses of small businesses went bankrupt, these ideas, already forgotten in Europe, gained fans among big business leaders in the New World. On the other hand, the scale of large entrepreneurs was already so huge that they could ignore the society attitude. Unlike the sole proprietor, focused on the local production and raw material base and a limited market segment, the activities

of a large industrial entrepreneur required coordination of efforts in many related industries. Requiring a large number of trained and skilled workforce, large industrial production directly depends on the existing system of training – general and professional education, scientific research, and technological developments. Large production also required a large market, and effective demand for its products, and therefore was interested in a fairly high level of welfare. The need for political stability within the country, interest in a favorable legal environment, tax and customs policy led to the transformation of big business into an active political force and its growing interference in both domestic and foreign policy of the state.

Thus, the success of a large entrepreneur, a powerful company is determined by many social and political factors, and the relationship and interdependence of business and society are growing. Entrepreneurship is showing more and more interest in a friendly attitude towards it, so it seeks to present its activities as useful and beneficial not only to him alone but to the whole society. Thus arose the business ethic of generosity and service to business, the initial forms of which were charity and philanthropy.

At all times, rich and successful people have donated money to help the poor through paternalistic commitment or religious merit, as well as to reduce social tensions. They also promoted education, science, and the arts, ensuring the growth of their status and recognition in society through participation in areas of high prestige. In countries where charity and philanthropy have traditionally been highly developed, the richest and most successful entrepreneurs have gained popularity and public gratitude not for their contribution to economic development, but for charity, and patronage of science and arts.

Industrialists and merchants have long been unable to gain public recognition and achieve their financial impact due to the lack of prestige in business and condemnation of the exploitation of employees. Therefore, they sought to achieve public recognition through non-economic actions that enjoy high prestige in society. One of the main reasons for the great enthusiasm of many large entrepreneurs for charity and philanthropy was not the natural inclination to philanthropy, but the desire to justify the exploitation of workers and achieve public recognition through activity in those areas of prestige. Thus, the great textile manufacturer and creator of the world-famous art gallery *Pavel Tretyakov* wrote that he sought to “make money so that what was gained from society would also return to society (the people) in some useful institutions” (Botkina, 1960, p. 239). Both in the public consciousness and the historical memory, such entrepreneurs remained exactly as patrons, not as production organizers or clever dealers. The special entrepreneurs’ devotion of traditional societies to the idea of generosity and social service is explained by the fact that one of the most important foundations of moral consciousness in these societies was common to all, a structured ideology of service, to which businesses joined due to its religiosity and social service.

In the United States, *Andrew Carnegie* was one of the first proponents of business ethics. This legendary entrepreneur, the embodiment of the American dream, a native of a poor family who amassed a huge fortune, at the end of his life retired from business and engaged in charity and literary work. Relying on his own experience in the big steel industry, A. Carnegie advised starting-up entrepreneurs and argued that everyone can succeed if they persevered and vigorously pursued their goals. The most famous of his works was written in 1901, “The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays”, which claimed that a large enterprise brings great benefits to all society, not only creating jobs and redistributing some part of the profits in the form of wages but also in charity, investing in cultural and social security institutions.

However, charity and philanthropy, while providing gratitude to contemporaries and good memory of descendants, do not relieve the social tension that is inevitably caused by business development, and do not solve a complex of social problems that accompany the development of large industrial enterprises. The fate of Russian pre-revolutionary entrepreneurs is particularly instructive, because, having done so much for the development of national culture, they did not pay enough attention to the social protection of the population. Only at the turn of the 19th -20th centuries, industrialists began to take care of wage growth, living conditions, and medical care for their workers, but it was too late and did not save society from a devastating social explosion.

The ethics of serving society in the form of charity and philanthropy had been criticized by some entrepreneurs who saw its limitations. Thus, *Henry Ford* (1922) wrote: “... Charity has never solved a task for any length of time” (p. 148). For all its good intentions, philanthropy, according to H. Ford, deprives people of the most important thing – the ability to work and support themselves deprives the “self-confidence” on which true initiative and independence are based. H. Ford himself considered it necessary not to separate the needy, for example, the disabled – with handouts, but to provide them with jobs at their enterprises so that they could feel full-fledged members of society and independently make a living.

Already at the beginning of the twenties century, it was formed a different view regarding the ethics of social service business, which was seen in economic activity as such. One of the first proponents of this view on the social role of business was H. Ford. In his book, “My Life and Work”, he argued that efficient production is a boon in itself, as it lowers prices and raises wages, which is beneficial for businessmen as it increases effective demand. Such effective industrial development can create the conditions for solving social problems: “Service-based industry makes any charity superfluous ... The kind of philanthropy that spends time and money to help the world support itself is much better than the one that only gives and even increases laziness. Philanthropy, like everything else, should have been productive, and to my opinion, could have done do” (Ford, 1922, p. 150).

A similar view of the social service of business began to spread among other leading representatives of the commercial and industrial class, especially after the beginning of the First World War. Working as private people – because entrepreneurship is based on this – they began to realize that by creating their own private business, they simultaneously create a business and state-building. The arrangement of economic and material life began to turn into a socially significant issue, in service.

3.2. Business ethics: “Social responsibility”

The ethics of business social responsibility to society more broadly covers the full range of problems arising from the functioning of big business. Within the framework of the ethics of social responsibility, entrepreneurship as a social institution expands its functions and roles to ensure the functioning of other social institutions, primarily educational, scientific, health care, and culture, as well as guarantees the basic rights of the individual. The scope of business activity is expanding far beyond the economy, which leads to ambiguous assessments and consequences.

The formation of socially responsible business resulted from the already described interest of large enterprises in socio-political stability and high quality of labor. Initially, entrepreneurs’ social responsibility was manifested in the concern for the material well-being, social security, and educational level of their workers. Huge industrial enterprises of industrial society were gradually transformed into centers of social infrastructure growth – networks of medical institutions, schools and vocational schools, kindergartens, libraries, and more.

Of course, the call for social responsibility was dictated and is dictated not so much by personal humanism or high consciousness but by an understanding of its real benefits for a stable and prosperous business. On this basis, modern ideas about social role and responsibility of entrepreneurship are formed.

Modern ethics of business social responsibility stems from the essence of business understanding, its goals, and its main functions. The traditional Western view of business as an activity aimed at making a profit through the production of goods and services is complemented by an understanding of business as a source of growth in social welfare, achieved through the production of goods and services. With external similarity, the difference in emphasis determines an important change in meaning: from profit, it is gradually transferred to the growth of social welfare, although profit continues to be a top priority for companies. However, the accompanying change in the perception of business as a socially significant value and not just a source of individual enrichment, entails the question of the forms of broad interaction between business and society and the social responsibility of business. The latter is being debated. The main points of view expressed in the discussions can be formulated as follows:

1. The opponents' position on the issue of business social responsibility:

Opponents of relying on business social responsibility, which is dominated by entrepreneurs and scholars who support economic liberalism, insist that shareholder profit and benefit remain the main function of the business. It is the profit and satisfaction of shareholders' interests that is the main goal of managers' efforts and imposing additional problems on them that do not belong to the business sphere, that may hinder the achievement of this goal. From the liberal theorists' point of view, the spheres of business and society responsibility are separated based on a kind of social contract, the revision of which in the direction of imposing social responsibility on business would be unfair and immoral.

Thus, opponents of business social responsibility are based on a rather rigid differentiation of different social spheres – economics and entrepreneurship, politics, public administration and social protection, and so on. In their view, giving social responsibility to business essentially means transferring part of the functions of government or other state structures, which is a threat to democracy, because it gives too much power over society to non-democratically elected and obligated businesses by responsibilities to society. An important argument against burdening business with social problems is the restriction of its freedom in purely business terms. Social and business responsibilities are often in conflict, and the need to give priority to the former can lead to losses in fulfilling the main task of any business – ensuring the profits of shareholders.

2. The supporters' position on business social responsibility:

Proponents of business social responsibility assume that it is part of society, depends on society, and therefore must take care of society. A good for business is good for the whole society.

Based on the above, can it be argued that in a mature industrial and post-industrial society, the business has abandoned the former presumption of economic profitability and efficiency as a basic criterion with which to approach all phenomena of social life? Some supporters of post-industrial society theory argue that social, cultural, humanistic, and environmental components have now become integral criteria for effective development. At the same time, the very nature of postmodernism, on the one hand, and globalization, on the other, speaks of the haste of these optimistic conclusions. The lack of a unified universal morality, characteristic of postmodern society, removes from business representatives all obligations beyond their corporate morality, which is not only efficiency-oriented but also based on the principle of self-sufficiency and self-value of economic growth, detached from real social life. Globalization creates conditions for capital mobility on a global scale, while the social and cultural infrastructure of society remains local, rigidly tied to the place. The ability to vary flexibly depending on the production profitability, goods' sales, taxes payment, etc., undermines the incentives to socially responsible practices

arising under the conditions of local capital binding. All this creates conditions for the liberation of big business from the social obligations that it had acquired earlier due to the need to optimize the social environment of its activities. Therefore, solving the problem of big business social responsibility requires purposeful efforts on the part of other social institutions and society as a whole.

Modern ethical concepts of business and society relationship are based on the fact that the main social responsibility of business is not to promote poverty and unemployment, avoid discrimination against women and national minorities in the field of employment and wages, improve working conditions, prevent environmental crime and unjustified waste of non-renewable natural resources. The developed criteria for evaluating business activities are based on the extent to which: 1) produced products, services, and their quality contribute to overall prosperity, and 2) how natural resources and labor are used. Given this, the main areas of business social responsibility are an investment, production, environment, and employment.

Responsibility in the field of investment involves a set of moral problems facing investors and shareholders. Investors are often concerned not only with the received profit, but also with the company's social role and the moral nature of doing business. The division of investment and management business forms in joint-stock companies contributes to the desire of shareholders to control managers at all levels.

It is known that there are very profitable areas of legal entrepreneurship, investing in which is not always approved by society as a moral act. This has been the investment in the military-industrial complex during unpopular wars period, for example, in the United States, during the Iraq War from 2003 to 2011, the military business was widely condemned in society. However, it should be borne in mind that moral repression, unlike criminal legal repression, cannot stop a particular business activity development, and investment in morally condemned proceedings is still carried out.

Most often, moral prohibitions on certain areas of investment are relative: investing in the military industry is welcomed and encouraged during periods of an increasing military threat, consolidation of society based on patriotic values, and so on. Morally neutral or morally positive investments in a changing environment can be harmful to society, morally convicted, and unprestigious: for example, the seizure of chemicals or nuclear energy after environmental degradation and severe environmental catastrophes have led to the declining prestige of these industries and the requirements of strict legislative control over them, and in some cases to the closure of particularly dangerous enterprises. The main moral principle of investment is that the non-infliction of social evil has a moral priority over the desire to promote social welfare.

Social responsibility in the production sector implies an assessment of the produced product in terms of its compliance with the broad interests of

consumers, including interest in environmentally friendly and safe to use products, protection of physical and moral health, protection of public safety, and more. Society monitors the production and distribution of morally harmful and prohibited goods and services – drugs, pornography, prostitution, arms trafficking, etc., through criminal prosecution, legal regulation and control, and in other cases, allocating to them strictly defined, local niches in the market (for example, pornographic publications, videos, as well as all kinds of related products can be purchased only in certain stores, urban districts, beyond which their penetration is not allowed).

Criteria determining the prohibition or restriction on the production and distribution of goods and services are mobile and are determined by the established cultural traditions of society. For example, the production and consumption of alcoholic beverages in most countries are tightly controlled by the state, and in some Muslim countries, it is even banned under the threat of corporal punishment.

The manufacturers' responsibility to society is to ensure product safety. In some cases, manufactured goods are always dangerous, for example, combustible and toxic materials, or their operation is associated with a certain degree of danger – cars and other vehicles, some tools, and appliances. In these cases, manufacturers are obliged to ensure maximum safety of the product and provide the consumer with reliable instructions for operation, storage, disposal, etc. All kinds of devices and units must have instructions for safe operation and be arranged in such a way that even the most incompetent user, even a child, could not be harmed (although the reliability of such precautions is always relative). The consumer should be informed about the product composition, available chemical additives, and preservatives that can harm health, and aware of the optimal shelf life of the product.

However, in such cases there is often a conflict between the product safety liability, ie the interests of society, and the desire to reduce the cost of production, that is, purely business interests. In such cases, society resorts to certain safety standards, the violation of which is prosecuted under the law. Goods that meet the standards are not necessarily safe, but the responsibility for their safety is already fully borne by consumers.

The most important area of responsibility is ecology. The reasons for environmental problems are rooted in spiritual and moral tradition of Western culture, focused on the mastery of nature and its transformation for the benefit of man. But the experience of modern development has shown that the interests of consumption and expansion of production run counter to the vital needs of all people without exception, including entrepreneurs, in a clean environment. In a post-industrial society, when scientists using the latest advances in chemistry and nuclear production physics can cause irreversible damage to the environment and human health, the environmental problem is the main field of conflict between society and business.

Indeed, many companies and entrepreneurs, in the pursuit of profit, ignore the environmental danger of their business, which through the efforts of various “green” organizations is increasingly leading to scandalous revelations and loss of public prestige and trust by entrepreneurs (not to mention financial and other sanctions). In this regard, the companies concerned with their image in the eyes of society are pursuing a special policy aimed not only directly at ensuring environmental safety of production and environmental protection (which they are encouraged by legal guidelines – fines, taxes, etc.) but also restoring public trust. The American Chemical Manufacturers Association, for example, has adopted the “Responsibility and Care” program, which involves, firstly, the openness of information and acquaintance of the local community with the production to establish trusting contact with it; secondly, establishing contacts with local authorities and emergency services and assisting the population in case of accidents; third, commitments on waste minimization, storage safety and products transportation; fourth, instructions for consumers on the safe use of products and waste disposal. Central to the program is a commitment to integrate environmental protection into the firm's long-term strategy, and not to carry it on a residual basis. The purpose of this and similar programs is to acquire the lost public trust in the company and its products due to the environmental crisis, the acquisition of previously compromised industries a positive image in a new environmental culture.

The most important area of business social responsibility is employment. One of the main entrepreneurship functions is job creation. It is considered to be the most important form of social service, and the greatest benefit that business development brings to society. At the same time, it is the entrepreneurs' activity in the field of employment that often generates social conflicts, as it leads to dismissals, reduced employment, and lower wages, and is accompanied by various discrimination in employment and pay, such as gender, racial, ethnicity. Traditional forms of discrimination, such as women or foreign workers from third world countries, both in pay and hiring, are retained with the emergence of new types of employment and forms of work.

The most common way to avoid or reduce the negative social consequences of employment discrimination is through various quotas, special programs for restoring justice to previously discriminated national and other minorities, and for women, which provide them with employment benefits. However, such measures actually turn into so-called reverse discrimination – already against those who previously had a better positions: so, restoring justice to, for example, black women, leads to infringement of white men's rights. Such reverse discrimination was a serious socio-cultural problem in the United States in the late twentieth century, when respect for the rights and dignity of African Americans, which had become a basic norm of behavior, turned into problems for whites.

The example of reverse discrimination illustrates the fact that the social and ethical problems that arise in employment are so diverse and complex that it is impossible to find a universal solution. Experts believe that only an individual approach to each specific problem can be fruitful. Therefore, discrimination in employment and recruitment is difficult to overcome and reproduce in new activities, but it is a constant focus of public relations professionals, who ensure that it does not lead to increased social tensions and loss of company's identity.

One of the most important problems that modern specialists in the field of business-society relations have to solve is the problem of regulating these relations. The objectives of the control over the business sphere is to minimize the damage caused by the activities of freelancers to the social and natural environment. However, among theorists and entrepreneurs there is no single point of view on the need for external control aimed at correcting morality and social responsibility, ie direct control over business by society.

Opponents of public control over the business sector believe that there is no need for it, as violators of moral norms in a free market and independent media destroy themselves, losing the trust of their customers and prestige among partners. In addition, opponents of control over socially responsible business practices often argue that such practices are formed naturally as a result of modern marketing, which forms production in response to real effective demand. Thus, entrepreneurship only responds to the demand of society, therefore, its activities are always socially conditioned. What is not necessary or harmful to society will not be in demand and will gradually go away.

However, society is heterogeneous, and different social groups may have different needs, including antisocial ones, such as drugs, pornography, etc., or simply the need for alcohol, tobacco, etc., which should be satisfied in a way that not to harm human health. Even food needs can be met in a way that is dangerous to humans, for example, if they contain harmful preservatives, genetically modified foods. The very process of producing essential products can also be dangerous, for example, for the environment. The solution to all these problems lies within social responsibility of entrepreneurship, and society must take adequate measures to protect its interests, for example, in the form of legal restrictions or media campaigns.

Supporters of active control of society over the social consequences of business rightly believe that in conditions of complete economic and information freedom, business itself, without external control, is unable to maintain social responsibility and morality of its activities at a high level. According to proponents of social control, the specificity of business as a form of activity is that in the pursuit of profit are constantly reproduced all sorts of abuses, which to some extent contradict the interests of society, which business alone

can not cope. Socially responsible entrepreneurship practice becomes sustainable when it is profitable, and the benefit is not necessarily perceived as a profit. The task of external control by society is to create a climate, such an environment for entrepreneurship, in which socially responsible practice becomes profitable.

In such an environment, modern companies, which are concerned about their relations with society, seek to take a socially responsible position, for which they resort to various forms of internal regulation and public relations. These include, first of all, the fixation of socially oriented principles of activity in institutional structures – public relations services and so on. The same purposes are the declaration of concern about the benefits of consumers and society in general in special mottos and moral codes of enterprises as consolidated values and norms that managers must follow in their daily work. For example, until 1983, General Motors operated under the slogan “The company's main goal is to make money”, rigidly emphasizing its focus on profits and economic efficiency. Undoubtedly, the company's position was attractive to shareholders. In 1983, the company declared its main goal to “produce products and services of such quality that our customers get the highest pleasure”. Such a change in value orientations indicates the high importance for the successful operation of the company to demonstrate its commitment to common interests, the well-being of others, and not just selfish needs for enrichment. DuPont Chemical Corporation has proclaimed the slogan “The best things for a better life through chemistry” (O'Sullivan et al., 2012).

Strengthening the image of socially responsible business is done by emphasizing adherence to any universal value, for example, economic and technological progress. General Motors declares that “Progress is our most important product”. The Coca-Cola Code of Ethics is strictly mandatory for all employees in any country where there are branches of the company, declares the principle of civil responsibility to society as a moral imperative of the company activities, as well as a “philosophy of honesty and integrity”. All employees are ordered to act in accordance with the cultural and moral norms of each particular country, to respect its traditions and laws, but to comply with the requirements of unity and integrity of the enterprise (O'Sullivan et al., 2012).

In general, it should be noted that society and business are now interdependent systems and influence each other. Social responsibility and entrepreneurship morality as a subsystem of society can not be independent of the general state of morality and social responsibility. This means that entrepreneurship as an institution will pursue a socially responsible policy only if it is necessary for the case, if the antisocial practice of entrepreneurship not only meets with public condemnation, but also prevent business success in one way or another.

Since business social responsibility is a result of its functioning as a social institution, it cannot be maintained in isolation from the morality and culture

of society as a whole. There can be no responsible and moral business where the ethical categories of duty and responsibility are devalued, altruistic values are disavowed, and social service is not a prestigious and respectable field of activity. It is impossible to expect manifestations of social responsibility from entrepreneurs in a society where individualism and competition dominate as basic values, where the cult of a strong personality is not complemented by humanistic ideals, where public opinion and the media encourage selfishness and shameless profit. On the contrary, it is the interest of society, demanding moral climate, exploitation intolerance, selfishness, violations of honesty and justice norms, respect for human dignity and humanism that encourage entrepreneurs to conduct socially responsible policies. Therefore, the problem of socially responsible honest business is primarily a problem of the general level of culture and morality.

3.3. Ethics of business relations

Ethics of business relations should be understood as the moral aspect of relations between the participants of a business enterprise. This includes relations between economic organizations and individual entrepreneurs in the context of horizontal market relations, that is, between partners, shareholders, sellers and buyers, producers of goods and services and their customers, as well as relations within economic organizations – vertical relations between employers, managers, and employees. The specificity of the business relations' ethics is that its subject is not only individuals but also organizations whose actions can be considered in terms of morality. Thus, business ethics subjects can be collective. The main problem of the ethics of business relations is the study of general moral preconditions of business life, as well as the inclusion of the moral dimension in the relations of its participants.

The moral character of business life during the pre-bourgeois period of its history was questioned. In Western Christian countries, which have become the cradle of the capitalist market, such forms of entrepreneurship as usury and banking, trade, and even the use of hired labor in manufacturing have experienced severe moral repression. In the European Middle Ages, the businessman was not viewed in good faith or honesty. *Thomas Aquinos* (1273) said that "Trade contains something shameful" (p. 311), suggesting that profit cannot be made without deception and injustice. At the level of public consciousness, non-recognition of business people and business life morality has been recorded in proverbs such as "Do not cheat, do not sell". Usury left a moral stain on a person that could not be washed away. The German national preacher and philosopher *Berthold von Regensburg* (1269), in his appeal to the moneylender said: "You can take the cross to the pope, cross the sea, fight the pagans, recapture the holy Sepulcher, die for God's case, end even lie down in the Holy Sepulcher, and yet for all your holiness your soul died" (p. 83).

Radical changes in ideas about the moral image of the European businessman occurred with the spread of Protestant ethics. The moral legitimization of wealth and success as signs of godliness and the pursuit of profit as service to God has led to the recognition of the moral dignity of business life. In the nineteenth century, philosophical and moral theories appeared that not only justify the pursuit of profit, success, and wealth, but also such attitudes that proclaim them as the universal standard of morality. The English philosopher *Jeremy Bentham* (1826) created a philosophy of utilitarianism, proclaiming usefulness as the basic value and driving motive of human behavior. As a moral ideal, utilitarianism acknowledged “the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people”, and the criterion of morality – the achievement of profit, satisfaction, goodness and happiness. Individual interests are considered by J. Bentham as the only real, public interests are reduced to a set of individual. At the end of the nineteenth century, in America there was a philosophical pragmatism, which considered morality as a product of concrete human experience and recognizes the criterion of good satisfaction of perceived needs. And since there are many needs, a compromise is needed to achieve harmony, ie to satisfy the maximum possible number of needs while minimizing complaints (Peirce, 1912). Thus, meeting the need for wealth and success is balanced by meeting the needs of society in economic development and production of material goods and services, as well as in job creation.

Modern specialists in the field of business relations ethics assume that economic life is too complex and multifaceted, affects the personal and collective interests and motives of too many people to be approached with a single and universal scale of assessments, from the standpoint of good or evil. Regarding the sphere of entrepreneurship and business life, as well as politics, social relations and even religious history, it is impossible to unequivocally conclude about the absolute superiority of some types of behavior and organization and the absolute inadmissibility of others. Altruism and egoism, humane and inhumane, social and anti-social are so closely intertwined in business life that, according to Canadian scholar *David Braybrooke* (1989), it can only be judged as a particular “middle type” of moral behavior. In his work “Ethics in the World of Business”, he stressed that the assessment of actions in the sphere of business life is possible not from unambiguous positions of absolute good or evil, but as a set of selfish and altruistic tendencies (p. 192).

As the main dimensions or aspects of business ethics, horizontal relations between entrepreneurs and firms – partners and competitors can be identified; relationships of business people with customers and buyers, as well as vertical relationships within enterprises. The main moral problems in the relationship between partner companies in the free market are reliability and scrupulous performance of contracts, honesty and trust, as well as fair treatment of competitors.

Trust between partners and their reliability are important prerequisites for successful business. In the history of a business culture formation, honesty and reliability have always been the main virtue of a business person, the key to his reputation. Maintaining a reputation guarantees the stability of business relationships. In today's business culture, compliance with contracts is supported by legal mechanisms, which, however, are unable to cover all aspects and nuances of business relationships. Therefore, such moral qualities, as honesty, reliability, trust, retain their significance. As the well-known American sociologist *Amitai Etzioni* (2018) points out, the interaction between the legal market subjects is based on an extensive network of trust relationships, which are perceived as a moral obligation. Trust and honesty, reliability in the implementation of contracts facilitate and reduce the cost of business relationships. Where reliability and trust are weak, we have to resort to the legal registration of contracts, control over their implementation, or even with the help of special services that exercise such control. The free market, according to A. Etzioni, thrives where moral and social values are strong enough to limit and stop immoral and antisocial business practices, but at the same time do not overlap with healthy business orientations.

Competition is an essential element of the free market, which is most strongly associated with the values of freedom, initiative, success, achievable and liberal values in general. Competition is assessed as the exercise of individual freedom in the field of economy, the basis of market dynamics, its flexibility and functional compliance with the needs of society. The main reason for competition is freedom and equality of opportunity, business orientation and the desire to succeed.

The importance of free competition for market development was actively defended by the famous American economist *Friedrich von Hayek*. In his work "The Road to Serfdom" (1944), he argued for the perniciousness of abandoning the principle of free competition. But at the same time, the competition itself manifests itself in a fierce struggle (often of a non-economic nature), which is accompanied by ruthless suppression, ousting, and ruin of the opponent. Therefore, in the field of competition, it is most difficult to adhere to moral norms, and here is the market rigidity. Therefore, competition is often the subject of criticism from opponents of the free market.

Modern society humanization, growing interconnection and interdependence of people, as well as openness and publicity, give rise to the desire to mitigate the negative consequences of competition for maintaining its positive impact on the market. We are talking about the support, first of all, from the state, as well as non-governmental unions and associations of businessmen, those entrepreneurs who can not survive in the fight against large corporations. However, the moral principles of modern business life do not allow pseudo-humane support of those who fail not because of the objective laws of the mar-

ket, but because of lack of necessary skills, initiative, determination, because of the real uncompetitiveness of goods and produced services.

Business ethics regulates the relationship between producers and consumers of goods and services. The rights of consumers in society are protected by law, which allows to prosecute unscrupulous producers and dishonest sellers. However, even here the legal norms do not exclude situations of “relatively honest deception”, when insufficient competence or insufficient vigilance of consumers of goods or services is used on the principle “a pike lives in the lake to keep all fish awake”. Canadian business ethics researcher *David Braybrooke* (1989) does not encourage business people to “quixotic”, but considers it necessary to revise the principles of the relationship between sellers and buyers and seek such a strategy of behavior when commercial success is achieved without “playing” with the consumer. The pragmatic motive for such behavior of the seller and the manufacturer is to preserve his business reputation.

The most important aspect of business ethics is the relationship between firms and employees. The most common moral problems in this area are the exploitation and manipulation of the individual and the conflict between the moral orientations of the individual, business interests and responsibilities to the firm. Exploitation and manipulation of the individual occur when one has power over the other and uses that power to his advantage. The most popular reason for exploitation is the unequal distribution of power and responsibility, when decisions are made in units, and their consequences, especially in the case of failures, fall on all employees. This is a specific problem of Western culture, in contrast to the Japanese, where the ethics of general hardship is adopted and in times of crisis, the leadership itself is the first to reduce their salaries and the latter to increase.

A frequent case of personal manipulation is invasion of privacy. The most common case is overtime work, which takes away free time from family or other personal affairs.

The requirements to vote for those candidates whose programs the firm is interested in, not to engage in political activities that are dangerous to the reputation and image of the firm, etc. can also be considered as interference in private life. However, such interference with the company’s private life can at least be justified by its purely business interests. But there are often precedents for such an interference, which can not be justified by anything. For example, when the leaders under the pretext of following common morality or religious norms invade the family, intimate life of employees, illegally appropriates the functions of educator, guardian of morality. For example, H. Ford, who regarded his workers as cogs in conveyor lines but paid them high wages (\$ 5 a day at \$ 2.5 per industrial average), set up a sociology department that was actually a kind of moral police. “In the early years of the department exi-

stance, it was headed by a diocesan priest, and his assistants visited the homes of all Ford factory workers, monitoring their lifestyle and morality. They systematically dug up every malicious act that harmed their physical condition or morals. The perpetrators, who had been guilty, were not forgiven, but rather punished with deductions from wages and demanded repentance and correction” (Braybrooke, 1989, p. 207).

Recently, the issue of business ethics as sexual harassment at work, has been intensively discussed, degrading human dignity and invading privacy. Often the background and precondition for this violation of business ethics is the dependent position of one of the employees, usually a woman. D. Braybrooke (1989), in his “Ethics in the World of Business” in this regard, notes that these motives and motivations should be limited to certain role niches.

Conflicts between the moral values of the individual and his responsibility to the firm arise from the existence of conflicting motives and value systems in people – a sense of duty, gratitude, loyalty, achievable business orientation, friendship, sympathy, and so on. The moral responsibilities of employees and managers to the firm include loyalty and discipline. For example, in the event of future mass layoffs or financial collapse, does a knowledgeable official have a moral right to warn those with whom he or she has friendly feelings in order to mitigate the effects of the crisis, or should he or she keep confidential as instructed by management? Traditional notions of loyalty to the firm are the predominance of moral responsibilities to the firm over all other responsibilities and interests.

Another source of values conflict is the hypertrophied orientation towards success, leadership, career, etc., which many companies cultivate among their employees in order to maintain high efficiency. The atmosphere of rivalry for the right to stay at work or move up the ranks is deliberately created and maintained, which creates not only the desire to show their best, but also to outrun colleagues, sometimes in a fierce struggle regardless of the norms of morality and decency. In such circumstances, the individual is faced with a choice between normal human, friendly and amicable relationships with colleagues or the realization of their own career, essentially selfish aspirations. However, it should be taken into account the fact that the atmosphere of confrontation, rivalry, hostility and aggravated selfishness often leads not to an increase in business efficiency, but to a deterioration of the psychological atmosphere and as a consequence of deteriorating performance.

Advocates of fierce competition between employees in the field of business refer to the fact that the achieved orientations, rivalry are supported in the fields of military service, art, science, etc., and really promote the strongest and best, which undoubtedly contributes to progress. In general, this ethical problem now requires a concrete solution that would be aimed at maintaining

a reasonable balance between high employee orientations and a friendly, non-conflicting atmosphere in the company.

Modern ideas about the rights of employees, as well as the growing need of society for openness and free information, require a rethinking of traditional views on the moral obligations of employees to companies. With the constant demand for loyalty and discipline, the right of employees to relative moral independence from the firm and a course of conduct that has its own moral ideals is increasingly recognized. The modern moral ideal involves doing business that ensures compliance with the moral standards of entrepreneurs and employees, even if it is against the interests of the firm and recognizes the need to protect the rights of employees to independent moral behavior.

Following the definition of the main problems of business ethics is the problem of opportunities and ways to maintain it. The question is whether the business world is able to maintain ethics at a high level, whether its own principles constantly provoke its violation; and how the sustainable incorporation of the moral dimension into business practice can be ensured.

It is often believed that the free market as a self-regulating system is able to maintain moral behavior at the appropriate level, because those who violate the rules of the market play deviate from the norms of honesty, integrity, justice, and eventually lose the trust of partners and customers and lose competition. However, on the other hand, the necessary values for the development of free competition, focus on success, enrichment, career, rivalry, which often go beyond peaceful competition, make business a zone of “moral risk”, contribute to the constant reproduction of various violations of moral norms. Therefore, many business practitioners and theorists believe that business ethics needs conscious support (Palekha, 2009).

Many firms adopt internal codes of ethics that prescribe certain norms and rules of conduct and commitment to certain values that are mandatory for all employees. Codes of ethics are designed to make certain norms of business ethics not just a matter of employees' free choice but to provide them with an institutional nature. For example, the Coca-Cola Code of Ethics has the power of law, which is strictly binding on all employees in any country where there are branches. This code is based on the principle of honesty and integrity that all officials must follow. They are ordered to respect the laws and traditions of any country, but to adhere to the requirements of unity and integrity of the company, to profess absolute loyalty to it. Employees are strictly forbidden to have their private interests in the affairs of suppliers, customers, or competitors. Another essential requirement for employees is honesty and openness of information about the state of affairs: impartial provision of financial and marketing statements is strictly punishable, even if it does not have an evil or self-serving purpose.

External means of monitoring compliance with general standards of business ethics are spontaneous or organized sanctions of business circles and the general public in case of their violation: verbal or printed approval or disapproval, friendly or unfriendly rumors, improvement or deterioration of reputation.

Practice shows that the inclusion of the ethical dimension in business life is determined by pragmatic motives: when it is useful for the cause and profitable, then the commitment to moral values is embodied in its practice, and when not, ethics remains an empty declaration. And ensuring a high moral level of business life depends not only on the entrepreneurs themselves (ie, people, oriented primarily pragmatically) but also on the level of morality in society as a whole. Almost everywhere, there is illegal criminal and semi-criminal business, not only immoral but also criminal, but its socio-economic niche, its share in the business community is generally determined by the state of society. In conditions of economic and political stability, growing welfare of the people, and a stable system of values and norms of behavior, the ethics of the business world are also maintained at a high level. In times of crisis and turning points in history, when the economy is in decline, the masses are in poverty, the value system is undermined, and landmarks are shifted – then in the business world, as everywhere, the ethical dimension is distorted and not included in decision making.

4. Conclusions

The article provides a theoretical analysis and justification of business ethics in the harmonization of modern society. The results of the study allow us to reach the following conclusions:

1. Socio-cultural tradition plays a decisive role in the relationship formation between business and society. It determines the place of business on the scale of socially significant values, its status, and the relationship between individual orientations and values of solidarity.

2. The nature of the interaction between business and society had changed at different stages of capitalism development. In the first stage, the main moral problem was the justification of business in the eyes of society, and the defining ideology was the business ethics of “Service”. In the second stage, when the business became established, there is a transition to business ethics “Social Responsibility”.

3. To integrate organically into society and legitimize business activities, it was necessary to find a place in the general system of values. Such a place in the early stages of capitalism was the business ethic of “Service”, in the forms of charity, philanthropy, and economic development. Although the first two forms provide gratitude, they do not relieve the social tensions created by the business. The third form is effective, which allows solving both economic and social problems of business and society.

4. Business ethics “Social responsibility” more broadly covers the full range of problems arising from the business functioning, going far beyond the economy. Traditional notions of business as a profit-making activity are complemented by an understanding of business as a source of increasing social well-being.

5. Opponents of this ethic believe that profit is the main goal of business, and entrusting social functions to it can hinder the achievement of this goal, which is unfair. Proponents of this ethic assume that business is part of society and, therefore, must take care of society, especially today, when it is moving to the global level, and society remains at the local level.

6. Modern ethical concepts of the relationship between business and society are based on the fact that the main social responsibility of business is not to promote poverty and unemployment, avoid discrimination against women and national minorities in employment and wages, improve working conditions, prevent environmental crimes and unjustified waste of non-renewable natural resources.

7. As the main dimensions of business ethics, horizontal relations between entrepreneurs and firms – partners and competitors can be identified; relationships of business people with customers and buyers, as well as vertical relationships within enterprises. Maintaining the ethics of these relations should be carried out both through the market self-regulatory function and based on codes of ethics that prescribe certain norms and rules of conduct.

The scientific novelty. Systemic and cultural deepening of understanding of the essence, role, and importance of business ethics in the organization of society.

The significance of the study. The significance of the study is revealed in the addition of science to new theoretical provisions on business ethics, as well as the possibility of using them in the process of training entrepreneurs and managers.

Prospects for further research. The prospect for further research in this area may be to clarify the features of business ethics in various spheres of human life.

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