Exploring ethical management from systemic perspectives

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Abstract

We have witnesses 'ethical management', which has increasingly much attention to Korean business managers (Yu and Moon, 2004). Ethical management regards as a fatal way of sustainable development, not dealing only with real and practical issues of business firms, but also with complex and problematic issues of business networks in societies. In other words, for business managers, ethical management became a strategic choice that fosters ethical and rational decision making that aims to achieve ethical objectives in an effective and efficient manner (Ferrell, *et al*., 2005). In order to study practical issues of ethical management from systemic perspectives, this paper seeks to appreciate the ethical management, which can be made through the reflexive research on Korean business contexts. Systems approaches are introduced and demonstrated to study ethical management in business practice

Key words: ethical management, sustainable development, a strategic choice, systems approaches,

INTRODUCTION

We have witnessed the 'ethical management', which has aroused much attention to Korean society during past decade (Park, 1994; Yu and Moon, 2004). The ethical management is much more complex and dynamic when managers take the corporate missions and responsibilities for improving organizational performance as well as satisfying stakeholders' needs and wants. There has been a stress in business ethics when making decision in which business companies take social responsibility where managers should consider welfares of employees, development of local communities, and environmental issues in Korea. It is certain that companies are increasingly facing

the challenges posed by sustainable development in the unforeseeable future. Facing with the uncertainty, sustainability and business ethics received much attention as they refer to the part of corporate strategy or a form of business investment for preparing future. More recently, sustainability or sustainable development is a global phenomenon. For business corporations, sustainability is not just about economic development; it is about cultural, social, political, and environmental interdependence. Acknowledging the fact that sustainability and corporate social responsibility will increasingly be regarded as core business issues, how can a firm strategically turn business ethics or ethical management for maintaining corporate sustainability? How can we reappreciate ethical management from systemic perspectives? How can we reevaluate systems philosophy and systems-based approaches in different culture, social, ethical, and political aspects of organization in Korea? Addressing these issues, this paper searches for making spaces for shared ethics which appreciates ethics for the 'minorities' that searches for an alternative way to looking at ethical management from poststructuralists' perspectives.

ETHICAL THEORIES FOR BUSINESS PRACTICE

Stakeholder theory to business ethics

As a business firm has evolved and developed in society, it is important to understand the expectation of different stakeholders, who include employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders, competitors, trade unions and Government agencies. In a traditional model of business, a business firm operates in order to create a wealth as a company wants to fulfil the wishes and purposes of the 'owners' or shareholders. It is potentially caused ethical dilemma through a growing tension between economic development and social welfare and justice (Park, 1994; Hoivik, 1996). Today, there is no doubt that corporate social responsibility is a critical for a company so it can attain its sustainability. According to stakeholder theory, business ethics is not concerned with the business company's internal behaviour, but is closed related with external causes. Accordingly, modern business has to include each member of stakeholders request to business, in which stakeholders hold the key to the success of the ethical orientation towards the sustainability of the business companies (Ferrel, *et al*, 2005, pp. 26-31). In practice, managers' responsibility is to increase profit for the benefit of the company without violating the law, thus, moral tendency of managers or practitioners can heavily rely on the utilitarian ethical philosophy as practitioners tend to stress economic factors when they make decision under economic pressures (Premeaux, 2004). In such

situations, practitioners of the business ethics are not only incapable of making socially responsible ethical decisions, but the doctrine of an ‘economic man’ is to suppress such thinking within organizations, as a consequence, it limits intelligent and ethical inquiries, encourages insincerity, and “unethical actions resulted in a bankruptcy that shatters the lives and retirement savings of many employees” (Premeaux, 2004, p. 269). When a company interacts with its primary stakeholders (i.e. customers, employees, shareholders, suppliers, community and Government regulatory agencies) and secondary stakeholders (i.e. special-interest groups, the mass media, competitors, trade associations), managers have to have an ethical responsibilities to manage a company for the sake of all stakeholders. Upon the auspices of business management, therefore, practical reasoning of the utilitarian theory has become useless. In other words, a stakeholder orientation is not complete unless it includes activities actually address stakeholder issues in the business context because a general form of moral reasoning does not always require the polemical reasoning, just as the context of moral problem cannot be presumed. So as stakeholder theory has addressed the question of which groups in society business corporations should be responsible to, ethical issues have to be addressed through the participation of the concerned stakeholder group. In this way, stakeholders define business ethical issues, which are problems, options or opportunities that seek for the participative decision-making process amongst individuals, groups or organizations. In practice, to understand the complex ethical issues in the business context is to understand a range of possibilities and alternative ways of looking at the existing ethical values (Morris, 2004). How can one find alternative ways of looking at the ethics of management in organizations? Searching for alternative ways of looking at ethical issues in the contexts of systems thinking, we draw attention to participative systems approaches to ethical and moral inquiries from the works of contemporary systems thinkers.

Rethinking Churchman’s Systems Philosophy and Ethical Management

“The systems approach begins when first you see the world through the eyes of another” West Churchman (1979, pp. 231-232)

According to Churchman, systems philosophy allows systems practitioners to explore and appreciate the various philosophical assumptions underpinning systems science. It allows to developing an inquiring system, which explores an epistemology and systems ethics of a particular systems approach or systems methodologies in depth (van Gigch,

2006a). It is argued that Churchman's 'metasystems approach' offers a scientific discipline can be characterized as a hierarchy of the three inquiring systems as Follows (van Gigch, 2006a, p. 4; 2006b, p. 16).

Level 1. The Real world Inquiring System, It deals with practice level of the discipline, where practitioners are engaged in 'problem-solving.'
Level 2. The Science Inquiring System, It deals with science level of the discipline, where the scientific methodology of the discipline is being developed and shaped.
Level 3. The Meta-level: the Epistemology Inquiring System, It deals with epistemological level of the discipline, which is the level at which the reasoning process, and a higher level of reasoning takes place where 'extraordinary science' are conceived.

This metasystem approach allows us to investigate the Philosophy of (Systems) Science, and its disciplines. Put differently, Churchman's philosophy stresses the appreciation of an importance of 'ethical science management' that is applicable to contexts of business, capitalist society, and possibly other contexts and situations (van Gigch, *et al.* 2006).

Critical systemic praxis and participative systems approaches for ethical decision management

As McIntyre-Mills (2003) had been stressed that the concept of social systems are different from natural systems in which positivistic science dominates scientific approaches, 'participatory design' is required to focus primarily on the acknowledgement of 'critical systemic praxis' for social and environmental justice, through two-ways communication in human societies. Hence, 'critical systemic praxis' is emerged from the development of participatory systems approaches, which are undertaken in order to explore multiple cultures, diversity and creativity of others "where all voices are heard" if possible (McIntyre-Milles, 2007, p.54). Understanding modern organizations and societies from systemic perspectives, networks of relations that are based on 'link and thrive', micro-power and micropolitics are central to developing and maintaining sustainability of organizations within open societies (McIntyre-Mills, 2006; Yu, 2006b). Participatory systems approaches are necessary to make a contribution to develop systems philosophy and ethics for making decision ethically through inter-subjective experience with the influences of social norms, cultural or ideological transformation for social and environmental justice. Appreciating the value of critical systemic praxis, we acknowledge that the social sciences and

systems approaches are not separate from questions of human values, ethics and multiple cultures for making ethical decisions in the contexts of designing an inquiring system. In the search for the alternative value for an inquiring system, we propose that 'Deleuzian Ethics' is needed for make the reflexive research possible on the sustainability of the modern organizations and societies that are conceived as the self-organizing and open systems.

Proposing Deleuzian Ethics

Leibniz describes as a force with events, to make 'something happen.' Such ontology of 'something happen' denotes not an entity but a process of action that is connected with everyday life, which is associated with the judgements of the Ethics as defined in terms of 'Good' and 'Bad' (what we refer to as Deleuzian Ethics), rather than 'Good' and 'Evil' (Boundas, 1993). Delezian Ethics is to show that the 'nomadic subject' is capable of traversing across the 'social codes'[1] by means of becoming 'pure' according to the principles of rhizomatic systems (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, pp. 16-17: see further details of the principles of rhizomatic systems in Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, pp. 7-25). In order to create the making of 'pure' events, the 'ontological priority' of thought takes place as a series of (Deleuzian sense of) events that always come from a metaphysical surface (Deleuze, 1990). This assertion leads us to discover the 'surface effects' which are regarded as a condition of a real experience. In our proposal to rhizomatic systems thinking, the 'surface effects reality' (it is 'virtual reality') happens through the process of a question with a 'throw of dice' which lead observers or participants to engage actively with a 'problem solving' practice that proceeds to the process of problematization (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 197-198: Yu, 2001, pp. 149-150). Deleuze's notion of 'desire' is a starting point for the ethical reasoning of what we proposed as Deleuzian ethics. Deleuze deals with ethics in terms of liberating 'desire'. 'Liberation' means 'something new' as a means of resistance to moral enslavement, cultural dominance, and monotonous boredom of existence. Deleuze's vision of an event becomes the creation of new ways of ethical reasoning, new modes of existence, and new ways of life (Pearson, 1999). 'Something new' is extracted which produces 'expectation' or anticipation for what could happen in the future according to 'ontological fields' that constitutes 'living present', that is "what happens" within the

[1] The presence of the social coercive repression is appropriate to make the appearance of what Deleuze and Guattari (1977, pp. 10-15) called the 'social codes'.

formation of pure spatio-temporal dynamics. Put differently, ‘sense’ flows into the ‘transcendental’ dimension of pure becoming (that is a pure event) which always extends from a pure past to future both at once through the process of problematization. This allows us to appreciate that an open system of a series of (pure) events can produce as a formation of ‘chaotic dynamics’ within the problematic fields. Deleuze (1990) explores the image of thought aimed at creating the ‘ethical difference’ that based on ‘unthinkable’ within a ‘plane of immanence’, it appears like a collection of simulacra and phantasms which refer to a problematic field (Yu and Lim, 2005). Upon the plane of immanence, an ‘effect’ of corporeal bodies has appeared in the present moment that can only be realised through ‘sense’. This effect is called as a pure event which does not have any physical or material aspects of it. It has “impersonal and preindividual singularities” aspect of its logical context at the same time (Deleuze, 1990, p. 103). For Deleuze, the image of thought explores the peculiar and unpredictable natures of events, which challenges the established way of thinking towards understanding the nature of the ‘natural’ world, chaos and life.

Deleuzian ethics creates a new mode of unconscious thought and existence, and new possibilities of life which leads to pose the new sorts of questions and problems, and a creation of new values that makes the ‘ethical difference’ (Yu, 2001, pp. 172-174). Then the ethical difference is emerged as something new through unconscious nature of transcendental reality, an inner ground of all corporeal entities, and the exterior movement. In experimentation, all transcendent presuppositions have to be renounced to refuse use of reason or rationality alone in the service of particular human interests. This allows thought to free and go beyond the boundary of ‘territorization’, proceeds to the unthinkable of chaos. Here, the image of thought encounters the chaos from the concepts and ideas being created in the form of ‘sense’. In experimentation, we receive questions from ‘outside’ and posing a series of new questions and problems, look for all chances and possibilities and construct assemblage and collage which produce a multiplicity of alternatives and solutions.

Proposing ethics for the ‘minorities’

Ethics for the ‘minorities’ is related to the question of whose voices are heard in the way in which we overcomes in processes of stakeholder representation, which tends to be happened during the use of systems methodology. Deleuze and Guattari (1988) construct their own ethical reasoning, what we refer to as ‘ethics for the minorities’. The

critical issue in ethics for the minorities is how the creative becoming of human and self-cultivation (that is proposed by Foucault) are to be conceived and mapped out. In order to propose ethics for the minorities what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) aims to produce a new kind of reality and a new model of living systems, that is rhizomatic systems or networks in social fields. How to link between the creative becomings and self-cultivation? By a means of the technique or technology of the self, an individual aims to disclose oneself in dialogical interaction with other persons in which a particular discourse generates in order to facilitate organizational changes. This process is very much connected to the idea of bio-politics as developed in the fist volume of *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1981). During the process of subjectivization, a moral agent(s) can be created in the form of a form of sexuality which emerges from the relations of power (which reveals as force relation) and will of knowing or knowledge (that aims to disclose 'truth') (Foucault, 1976, p. 11). If the problem of the relation between truth and subjectivity runs through Foucault's entire work, it is the notion of 'government', which allows him to transform it from a research around questions of power into research centred on ethics. Foucault idea of ethics is about the "excluded" which we refer to as ethics for the minorities, which that of "the government of the self and of others" is gradually appeared. This is the perspective from which Foucault enters into the discussion of self-cultivation (*culture de soi*).

CASE STUDY: THE 'REA' MANUFACTURER

Phase 1: Making a connection with persons in the social field.

In order to make the personal touch for making a connection with persons in the social field, Checkland (1981)'s SSM was used for exploring the multiple perceptions of problem situation within REA as participants agreed to use SSM as the problem-solving method. The basic process of the systemic intervention using SSM is summarised by the following stages.

Stage 1: Finding out "key issues"

The methods of finding out a 'rich picture' of REA were conducted by the study of the written documents, official records, questionnaire-based survey, social network analysis, observation and informal and formal interviews. It was identified that a centralized decision-making process was formed through a top-down hierarchy of REA. There was

a tendency for poor communication, lack of trust and understanding between managers and workers throughout the divisions in REA.

Stage 2: Express the problematic situation

In addressing any messy problem situations by SSM, the first step was to find out the current situations within REA from the various perceptions as possible in order to draw a 'rich picture.' These perceptions were expressed as follows.

Person A:
"The leaders of the working groups (including MIC) lacked vision for creating a condition to react to environmental changes."
Person B:
"There is a need for exchange a good quality of information between managers and working staff on a regular basis in order to make fast decision-making for improving the efficiency of work."
Person C:
"How can we create a condition for improving the problem-solving ability and effective interaction amongst the various working groups within the manufacturing division?"
Person D:
"Taking into consideration the semiconductor industry, what can we do about our corporate culture that gives us pride in our work?"
Person E:
"There are no effective evaluation systems and procedures for the measurement of operational performance of individual workers and working groups within the 'indirect' manufacturing division."
Person F:
"Communication flow is top-down and managers exercise a directive leadership. Our corporate policy focuses mainly on the operational performance in terms of the financial criteria. Workers do not wish to interact with others unless they have to. Having to deal with a hierarchical structure within REA, it is difficult to share the information and knowledge amongst all the levels of employees in the various divisions and working teams in REA… I would like to see a good relationship and more interactions between managers and workers within REA."

There were still some concerns about the 'knowledge management system' and

organizational learning that should be taken into account to affect both the cultural aspects of the organization and psychological issues of employees in REA. As the cultural and psychological issues of employees were influencing the knowledge management, the organizational learning could not be based on a particular view of the organizational effectiveness using a single 'functional' approach to change management. Rather the process of knowledge management and organizational learning should be able to deal with it adequately along with the complex processes of cultural transformation, which take into account personal and social contexts (Cummings and Worley, 2001).

Stage 3: Preparing 'root definitions'

Stage 3 was concerned with the preparation of 'root definitions', which were precise definitions of a notional system within a given situation. Having clarified the root causes of the problem contexts, root definitions were formulated, which seemed 'relevant' to the problem situations within REA. These were the 'knowledge management system' and the 'effective managerial activities system,' which are described as follows.

Root definition 1: The knowledge management system

A private owned system that produces and distributes a good quality of information and knowledge amongst employees within REA in order to make up three levels of management, which are concerned with operational efficiency at the production level, the corporate effectiveness at the strategic level, and ethical management at the normative level, through cooperative problem-solving, participatory decision-making, and having with good leadership, technology and learning culture within REA.

Root definition 2: The effective managerial activities system

It is a system to facilitate the formulation of corporate visions, strategies, effective managerial activities and capacity to achieve these activities with the aim of implementing corporate philosophy of REA by establishing a new form of social network which is necessary for complementing the availability of social capital and networks within REA.

Stage 4: Building conceptual models of the perceived reality

The purpose of building conceptual models was to understand the purposeful behaviour of multiple perception of a ‘human activity system’ within REA. The conceptual models contain ideas about the purposeful human activities which are concerned with the nature of the perceived reality in carrying out problem-solving activities within REA. There are two conceptual models which seem to be relevant to the problematic situation at REA. These are the conceptual models of ‘the knowledge management system’, and of ‘the effective managerial activities system.’ The development of the conceptual models has proven to be very useful to identify new aspects of the situation and possible areas for change. A few of these systems were formally modeled as human activities systems using the conceptual model approach. Further stages of SSM were carried out to facilitate a debate amongst participants, who are now involved in problematic situations within REA. However, it was difficult to see that further stages of SSM functioned to make a connection with other people who are the minorities (i.e. ‘non-regular’ and female workers in the workplace) within REA. For this reason, further stages of SSM have been done, which are not included in this analysis.

Phase 2. Creating rhizomatic networks in the social field

In phase 2, it is concerned with the development of rhizomatic networks in order to build communities of inquiry and practice that aims to create an ‘open space’ which generate interactions between participants and others (including minorities) within REA. The notion of the system’s boundary refers to historical, cultural, economic, social, political (and even environmental) realities that exist behind the given social field. In order to build rhizomatic networks within REA, there are two approaches of making the implementation of ethics for the minorities in the given social field. The first approach was aimed at improving knowledge and information sharing within REA through technical systems, which are called the ‘digital conference system’ within REA. The second approach was focused on more on the organizational process that facilitates to form informal groups and communities which were initiated by voluntary and participatory rhizomatic networks that created and shared visions, interests, desires, belief and knowledge of different individuals, and groups of people within REA. The rhizomatic networks referred to the various forms of informal groups and networks (called ‘dae-mul dan’ in Korean), which share their visions, interests and values, often through non-canonical practice in the participatory forms of informal education and learning within REA.

Phase 3. Drawing a natural boundary for ‘problem solving’

In phase 3, through participatory forms of informal education and learning within rhizomatic networks, participants began to be aware of a mismatch between the enunciative and machinic assemblages within the social field. Participants developed a commitment or progress that encouraged them to engage in participatory decision-making as they drew a natural boundary for ‘problem solving.’ As the notion of rhizomatic systems’ boundary refer to historical, cultural, social, economic, political and environmental situations that exist within the given social field, participants began to appreciate ‘problems’ in terms of the multiple variables of cultural, social, economic, political and environmental concerns in the context of the inquiry. To do so, participants appreciated the current situations as a series of events (which were seen as ‘singular points’), which led to the possibilities of “what happens” or “what will be happening” in the given situations. In this way, participants could see ‘problems’ in terms of a set of singular events (Deleuze, 1994, pp. 188-189: Yu, 2006b, p. 347).

Phase 4. Entering the process of probelmatization

By entering the process of problematization, participants appreciated the possibilities of all forms of new ‘assemblages’ that would be possible to happen in the social field. Then, a new thought begins to address ‘problems’ of the existing rules and regulations within the current ‘assemblage’ in the social field. When a new thought begins with knowing about problems of the current assemblage, the systems analyst and participants focus on “what happens” rather than “what is (the case).” Then, a new thought begins with considering micropolitics, in preference to micro-power, where everyone in an organization is making decisions. In this sense, “the decision-making which goes on in organizations, ubiquitous and universal, is itself rhizomic and produces activity and behaviour which is rhizomic - unspecifiable, unpredictable, uncapturable” (Jackson and Cater, 2000, p. 253). The process of problematization can be divided into three distinctive stages in which participatory learning has happened within the problem-solving practice. These stages can be summarised as follows.

Stage a: Collecting ‘information’

In an actual study, the archive of ‘information’ collected can include written documents and records, notes taken from formal and informal interviews with the members of staff within REA. Only the facts which are considered to be of relevance for collecting events data and analysing events data being collected in stage b are given as follows.

The company

The REA enterprise, though core business of manufacturing semiconductors, is engaged in many businesses which include chemicals, construction, and engineering. It is essential that REA’s technology be continually assessed and updated. For this reason, REA has been cooperating with American and Japanese companies in researching and developing ‘non-memory’ semiconductors since early 2000.

The tasks of the MIC

- Keeping up with a ever-changing technology in the industry of ‘non-memory’ semiconductors
- Monitoring the performance of production units

- Establishing and implementing real-time enterprise (RTE) system within REA.
- Making the unique corporate culture for the REA enterprise
- How to create the ability to get access to new business and to execute business on time
- Promoting corporate social responsibility and sustainable development of REA in order to enhance customers' trust.

Ideas and questions expressed by participants

- The high degree of autonomy and responsibility will be necessary for improving the overall performance of REA
- How to create and develop the unique corporate culture for the REA enterprise?
- How to transform the current system into 'good' management systems that aim to meet the global standards of sustainable development?

Stage b: Collecting events data and analysing them

To observe "what is happening" or "what happens" during the process of problematization, events data is collected and analysed. The analysis of events data collected is based on a need for further development of making sense of a series of events that leads to the possibilities which aims to fulfil the will and desire of rhizomatic networks and ethics for the minorities within REA. Events data collected during the process of problematization can be summarised as follows.

• Event 1: The process of managerial innovation has to be carried out by all participants within REA. (20th December 2005)

• Event 2: Our understanding of the managerial innovation activities cover quite a wide range of different issues; efficiency, leadership, business practices, cultural and social changes (2nd February 2005)

• Event 3: Dealing with various issues in our company, the real-time enterprise is necessary. It refers to democratic decision-making process that is a collection of policies and practices linked in relationships with stakeholders, business partners and suppliers in order to create shared values amongst them. (29th May 2005)

• Event 4: The success or failure of our company depends on the application of our core competencies, which rely on individual capacity and corporate culture that makes

"problems" of everything to facilitate the processes of innovation and creativity within REA. (21st November 2006)

To make the corporate policy and strategic management for implementing rhizomatic networks and ethics for the minorities, Event 5 happened in regards to the design and implementation of action programmes in order to make good business practice within REA.

• Event 5: We have to transform the current system into 'good' management systems that aim to meet the global standards of sustainable development, which delivers value to both our company and society. (16th April 2007)

Stage c: Making sense of a series of events

From the 'information' collected in stage a, the events data collected in stage b, and a number of issues were highlighted by analysing the events data collected, which will be used for making sense of a series of events in this stage. Based on the purpose of the participatory and rhizomatic systems methodology, participants had to properly recognise that the building of rhizomatic networks and strong stakeholder relationships are crucial for achieving ethics for the minorities that aims at the long-term sustainability of organizational, social and environmental progresses. To do so, the making of a series of events happened is shown in Figure 1.

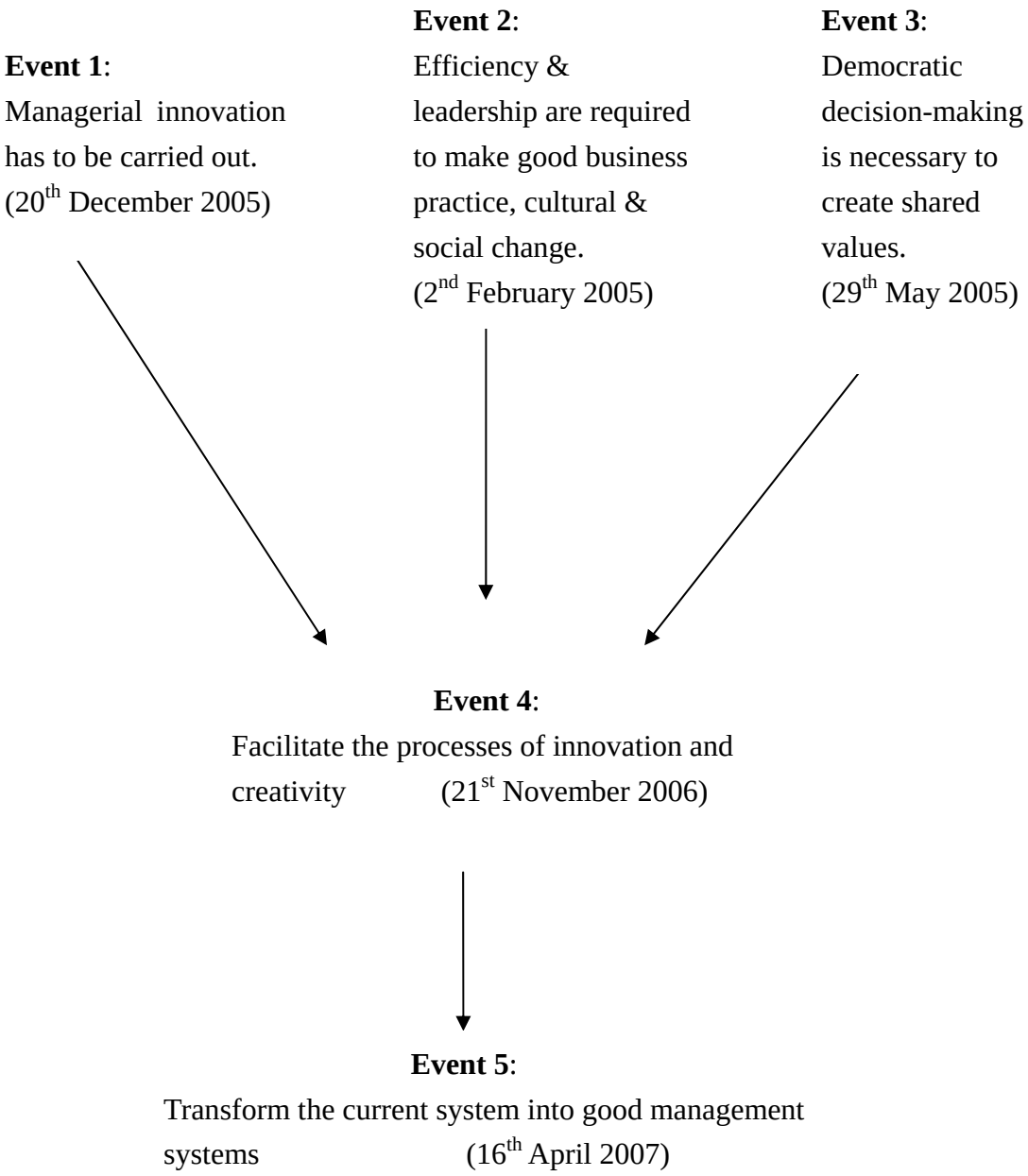

Figure 1. Identifying a series of events during the process of problematization.

Phase 5. Reach the new mode of existence through problematization

Throughout the previous phases of the methodology, we observed that the functioning process of rhizomatic networks is a self-organizing. Given the existing organizational content, rhizomatic networks were created and operated within the boundary of self-organization that brought people together, and they interacted and formed the self-constructive 'pure' events by reflecting inside and outside real events. In order to bind people in rhizomatic networks, a 'condensation nucleus' is necessary to cause the connection, binding individuals into a whole network (Jericek, *et al*., 2005). A condensation nucleus is often hidden, but essential dimension allowing for the emergence of the networks (or a community), and it (nucleus) maintains within the network or the community as a feedback mechanism works within the social environment. Where the process of problematization took place in the forms of a series of events within the social field, we appreciated that ethics for the minorities was in a way necessary and vital for the sustainability of rhizomatic networks within REA. In this way, the minority ethics became a 'condensation nucleus' as the conscious 'thought' or the will of the minority ethics was a vital force of the conscious process of 'thinking and doing' that turned inactive participants (including minorities within REA) into active participants. Put simply, participants were able to react, to change the current rules (or enunciative assemblage) of the social code through the process of problematization. In this way, participants were reached new modes of existence through the process of participatory and self-constructive ways of making a series of events, which brought about a 'joyful' life within REA.

CONCLUSION

Exploring ethical management from business/management perspectives, there is no argument that ethical management and sustainability are important, and they purpose to have sustainable approach to business that seeks benefits for employees, customers, business partners, shareholders and environment. Thus, stakeholder theory has addressed the question of which various groups in society a business firm should be responsible to. Managers have to have an ethical responsibility to manage a firm from benefit of all its stakeholders, in which the measurement of ethical management has to be dealt not only with a short-term view but also a long-term perspective. In other words, it is important that the measurement of ethical management and its sustainability

have to be dealt with corporate business strategies. As shown in the case study, ethical management is not just an isolated programme within REA, but an integrated and reflected one in a way of creating corporate future. In this sense, soft systems methodology (SSM) is necessary to articulate current issues of a company, modelling ‘systems thinking’ for creating open culture within REA. In short, using SSM, participative and open organizational cultures are important to appreciate the learning process of maintaining ‘good relationships’ which tends to focus on debate by which rich picture and conceptual models were used to understand the problem situation within REA (Checkland and Scholes, 1990; Checkland and Tsouvalis, 1997). However, it was difficult to see that further stages of SSM functioned to make a connection with the minorities or to turn them into active participants for ‘problem solving’ within REA. It is sensible that ethics for the ‘minorities’ is required to dealing with the extended application of ethics for the “excluded” others. Making or creating rhizomatic networks in the social fields was necessary to draw a natural boundary for ‘problem solving’, which was further developed to the process of problematization that appreciated “what happens” (in the forms of Deleuzian sense of events). During the process of problematization, Deleuzian ethics was considered to appreciate historical, cultural, political, economic ethical (and even environmental) aspects of contingent situations, which operated with micro-power and micropolitics within social fields. There is still lack of recognition of systems philosophy, systems approaches, and ethics for the minorities in the business contexts. Therefore, further research that links between systems philosophy (i.e. a meta-level inquiry of systemic intervention) and business practice has to be explored.

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