SYNOPSIS

Corruption has emerged as a well-debated subject against the backdrop of electronic government (e-government). However, there are diverse but disorganized viewpoints about the relationship between e-government and corruption, thus creating difficulties in obtaining a structured overview of the existing literature and identifying the avenues to take this research area forward. Despite this, prior studies have limited attempts to gather the fragmented observations to guide future research holistically. As a remedy to this concern, the first study in this thesis seeks to present the state-of-the-art literature on the relationships between e-government and corruption and identify avenues to propel future research on this field.

While looking into the literature, the studies dealing with e-government and corruption appeared to be classified into two broad streams of research: (1) studies exploring the impact of e-government on corruption, and (2) studies discussing the influence of corruption on e-government. While the first stream was significantly developed, the second stream was found to be under-developed owing to the lack of theoretical and empirical accounts. To fill the void, the second study in this thesis strives to theorize the mechanisms through which corruption in a country affects its desired level of e-government maturity. Further, the third study in this thesis empirically investigates how corruption in a country influences e-government maturity across countries. In essence, three interconnected studies comprise this thesis that made significant contributions to e-government and public administration literature.

The first study is about conducting a systematic review of 46 studies to provide a comprehensive and structured synthesis of the extant knowledge of

the literature linking e-government and corruption. In particular, this study provides a thematically organized classification of prior studies, imparts a crucial understanding of the key gaps in the literature, identifies the potential research areas, and provides a number of suggestions for advancing this field of research. Furthermore, an integrated conceptual framework is proposed that will draw the attention of the policymakers and guide researchers in advancing this field of research.

The second study was motivated by the paucity of theoretical understanding of the impact of corruption on e-government. As an initial effort towards developing a theoretical understanding, this study grounds on the institutional perspective to construe corruption and draws on five theoretical perspectives (i.e., the agency theory, the control theory, the rent-seeking theory, the theory of X-inefficiency. and the trust in institutions perspective) to develop a conceptual framework explaining how corruption in national institutions (political, legal, and media institutions) and national stakeholder service systems (business and citizen service systems) of a country could obstruct its e-government maturity. The study thus contributes to the knowledge base of e-government research by (1) offering important insights into a potential but nearly under-explored relationship between corruption and e-government maturity; and (2) addressing the need for theoretical development to enrich our understanding.

The third study addresses the dearth of empirical research on the influence of corruption on e-government. In doing so, it first draws on the agency theory, the rent-seeking theory, and the perspective of institutions as structures of cooperation and power and develops a conceptual framework to theorize the

moderating role of business-systems corruption on the relationship of corruption in three basic national institutions (i.e., political, legal, and media) with e-government maturity in a country. The hypothesized relationships are then empirically validated using a panel data of 94 countries. The findings show that corruption in business service systems of a country (1) positively moderates the relationship of political corruption, (2) negatively moderates the relationship of legal corruption, and (3) does not influence the relationship of media corruption with its e-government maturity. In summary, this study uncovers an exciting phenomenon, theoretical reasoning, and empirical validations that are expected to enrich the knowledge base of e-government and inspire further research.

Taken together, this thesis extends our knowledge base of the literature on e-government and corruption and advances our understanding of the "corruption—e-government" phenomenon.