



problem is widespread because the territory of Indonesia has not entirely implemented technology-based learning in the process (Kalogiannidis et al., 2022). These issues include: (1) limited student access and unequal infrastructure; (2) limited mastery of technology experienced by students and teachers; (3) the public's ability to access limited data and networks; (4) a limited government budget due to less-than-optimal distribution; and (5) people's unwillingness to accept online learning. Other service sectors also have the same problem because the service model used has to be changed to follow the service model in other New Normal eras (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2021). The government has taken many policies to respond to the pandemic, including: (1) Restrictions on social interaction (PSBB); (2) Change of place of work from home for some ASN; (3) Restrictions on worship activities; and (4) Restrictions on motorist mobilization (Abouk & Heydari, 2021).

Apart from being an epidemic that disrupted various previously prevailing norms, this pandemic is also a positive thing in encouraging the internalization of RI 4.0, which accelerates the process of revolution toward a post-modernism culture. The emergence of a new order of life that includes the social and economic community is very influential on the association pattern (Li et al., 2021). The new cultural pattern in the New Normal puts forward a long-distance communication model in its various activities, and public administration is a part of it. Under these conditions, innovation and change are natural and must be carried out immediately as an alternative and a response to the situation (Pardo & Ladeiras, 2020). In essence, the concept is always connected with every development that has become a paradigm of public administration from time to time, such as (1) the New

Public Management (NPM); (2) the New Public Service (NPS); and (3) the New Public Administration (NPG). This research focuses on innovations and changes in the public service sector in the New Normal era of the COVID-19 pandemic (Rivera & Uttaro, 2021).

Through the discussion above, the researcher then intends to examine how the government can create innovations and develop various public services in Indonesia in the new normal period.

### Public Services

The conceptual formulation of the definition of public services can be seen in Law Number 25 of 2009 concerning Public Services, which states that "Public services are activities in the context of fulfilling service needs following statutory regulations for every citizen and resident of goods, services, and administrative services provided by public service providers" (Loeffler & Bovaird, 2020).

Referring to this definition, public services can be interpreted as all forms of services, both in public goods and public services, which are the responsibility and carried out by government agencies at the center of the regions (Biondi & Bracci, 2018). In the context of efforts to meet the needs of the community and in the context of implementing the provisions of the legislation, public services are closely related to efforts to provide public goods or services (Wirtz et al., 2019).

Another definition is expressed by Masdar, who explains that public service is the provision of services (serving) the needs of the community that are interested in the organization's following the basic rules and procedures that have been set (Clement & Crutzen, 2021). Likewise, Frederickson said that in applying the principles of New Public Management, the government must be oriented toward public services. So if the

government views the community as the dominant factor in determining what is needed, then the government fulfills these needs to realize the community's satisfaction and welfare (Wood & Kickham, 2021).

That way, it can be said that public service is identical to the representation of the existence of the government bureaucracy because it is directly related to one of the functions of government, namely providing services. Therefore, the quality of public service reflects the quality of a government bureaucracy, where public service is the provision of excellent service to the community, which embodies the obligations of government officials as public servants (Furqan et al., 2020).

### **New Normal**

In recent months, the term "New Normal" or other terms such as the new normal, the new order of life, and the new normal have often been heard in everyday life. This term arose because of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which to prevent the transmission of the virus, people had to implement a new order that was not previously a habit (Herath & Herath, 2020). The new order includes social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands frequently, and other clean-living behaviors. Furthermore, due to keeping a distance, some work, especially in offices, is carried out online by utilizing communication technology. Likewise, to reduce crowds, work can be carried out from home (Work from Home/WFH) and the office (Work from Office/WFO) (Bauza et al., 2021).

"New Normal" is not an entirely new term. This term has appeared since the 19th century, although its usage is different from today. Henry A. Wise Wood, in his essay "Beware," was published in the Bulletin of the National Electric Light Association. In the article, the term "the New Normal" denotes the

period after the First World War. Wood divides history into three periods: the war period, the transition period, and the New Normal (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). In 2004, McNamee, a champion technology investor, coined the New Normal as a new era in business and finance as a destination for smart investing. He published the book "The New Normal: Great Opportunities in a Time of Great Risk." The New Normal is an entirely new era filled with uncertainty due to various things, such as terrorism and corporate scandals (Zafri et al., 2021).

However, this new era also opens up great opportunities for entrepreneurs who invest. The term "New Normal" is also used in economics, such as in the writings of Mohamed A. El-Erian. He coined the term "new normal" to describe the situation that followed the 2008 financial crisis when high unemployment, slow world economic growth, and stronger government intervention in financial markets were taken for granted (Eddleston et al., 2020). This term reminds the market and policymakers that the post-crisis industrial economy will recover in new ways. El-Erian also states that the term "New Normal" is more of a description of what is happening than what should happen (Sissoko, 2019).

Meanwhile, the new normal that emerged in Indonesia after the COVID-19 pandemic has no clear definition. Qodari introduced the term "Living Order with Covid-19" (THC), a living condition where the Covid-19 outbreak has not disappeared. Still, humans are returning to their work, school, and travel activities with health protocols (Irawan et al., 2020). Habibi, citing the opinion of Gajah Mada University Political Lecturer Sigit Pamungkas, said the new normal was a new way of life or a new way of carrying out life activities during the unfinished COVID-19 pandemic (Ramadhani & Lubis, 2021).

Then Habibi concluded that the new normal explained a condition formed due to the community's social life length during COVID-19. Meanwhile, Idris said that the new normal order is a transformation of life behavior in the community to continue carrying out routine activities but by implementing health protocols until a vaccine can cure the victims infected with COVID-19 (Ayuningtyas et al., 2021). According to him, sociologically, the new normal order is the same as the term adaptation to life in a pandemic emergency. This is intended so that various sectors of life that were previously stagnant or even stopped can (a little) move back (Domingues, 2020).

### **Method**

This research will be carried out using a qualitative approach through analytical methods. The first step taken by the researcher was to collect research data. This data was obtained from various research results and previous studies that still have relevance or a relationship with this research. The research data that has been collected will be analyzed immediately so that later the results of this study can be found.

### **Result And Discussion**

#### **Dimensions of Innovation in the Public Sector**

Innovation is applied to various fields when some problems and limitations require new ways to solve them. In simple terms, innovation can be used in all aspects with the meaning of everything that realizes new ideas as alternatives. In economics, this process is carried out by entrepreneurs through technological improvements in a broad sense, covering many aspects, such as new products and opening up new markets. This process runs dynamically and is carried out by agents, institutions, and macroeconomic structures that

embody new ideas as alternatives to a problem. The implementation of this idea includes a process of creation and development to create a service model, a network of market processes, and new resources that have not existed before to increase competitiveness and effectiveness.

Innovation is a dynamic process dominated by "thinking in the business sector" and is simplified into three stages: First, the origination, where the innovator introduces their alternative ideas; Second, adoption, namely, the process of choosing a market to increase the company's growth; third, retention, which is the stage of internalizing and institutionalizing an alternative idea in an economic system. Of course, this understanding is still in the realm of economics, developed by experts.

Meanwhile, in terms of implementation in the public sector, the concept of innovation is still being developed and does not yet have the same theoretical footing as in economics. The public sector has a slower response to innovation, which is closely related to the paradigm of public administration from (OPA-Old Public Administration) to (NPG-New Public Governance). The public sector has characteristics that distinguish it from the private sector: (1) Publicity. This value is related to the quality of individual and collective life in a specific society that is created and shaped by a normative consensus on the rights that must be protected in a society that becomes the benchmark for the government to make a policy; and (2) because these innovations tend to be internally oriented, their value is less responsive to collaborative innovation and changes in shared governance.

We can understand some of the dimensions covered by innovation and the study area as vital information to explain the correlation between the initiative and the conceptual framework.

Therefore, innovation in this sector is an important thing that becomes a reference for the government in making a policy. This can happen for several reasons, namely: (1) suggestions for making changes are made as a response to what is happening in the environment as well as an effort to change it; (2) improving a positive image that affects public confidence in government performance; (3) increasing legitimacy for public organizations to get full support from the community; and (4) contributing positively to organizational performance and effectiveness.

When the demands for the development of public sector services are increasing, this indicates that the sector's role is vital in people's lives. As providers of these services, the government and the state are increasingly needed, especially during a pandemic. This role is felt because it is the foundation of social life. In adapting to the times, innovation in the public service sector is very relevant, at least in five respects: (1) The size of the public sector tends to be large. This can be seen from the budget provided by the government to this sector, especially the basic needs of many people, which include education, health, security, water, electricity, and essential economic components; (2) public sector organizations are formed with a specific purpose, namely as a liaison between the government's hands to help provide for the needs of the wider community; (3) the implementation of innovation must be followed by excellent and clear quality standards, as future evaluations; (4) the policies taken must follow the development of the situation and circumstances; and (5) management demands collaboration with the private sector and the wider community.

The government focuses on the economic sector and the public sector to support the deteriorating conditions

experienced by the community. However, this is not accompanied by the alertness of officials and agencies in terms of services provided to apply assistance programs to the community. In the New Normal era, the APBN was focused on three things, namely: (1) testing for confirmed victims; (2) increasing the capacity of hospitals handling COVID; and (3) provision of drugs and other medical devices. In the National Economic Recovery, the government is massive in budgeting the APBN, namely Rp. 589.65 T, with details on the demand side (Rp. 205.2 T) and supply side (Rp. 384.45 T). The government continues to manage the budget and fiscal instruments for long-term management, including meeting food needs and encouraging the acceleration of the community's economy.

However, the performance of budget absorption still feels very slow, less responsive, and innovative. Experts consider that the public sector receives special attention and is a source of problems for various public complaints. For example, the education sector, security, administration, health, and especially the economic sector. But on the other hand, the momentum of the pandemic is a good thing for the public sector to improve and carry out various innovations toward an effective, responsive, more responsive but accountable digital bureaucracy. Old habits have been changed a lot, such as rigid procedures and switching to better online systems.

This is in line with technological developments that have entered the era of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, which is characterized by the development of digitalization in various fields, optimization and customization of product systems, automation, big data, and adaptation. In simple terms, this era is marked by the number of human

positions machines have replaced, and the intensity of labor mobility is getting higher. This condition forces the public sector to look for other alternatives for better services.

### **Development and Barriers to Innovation in the Public Sector**

The New Normal era is a test period for public sector services to be able to evaluate their success or shortcomings in the future. Ideas and creativity need special attention, not only in technical aspects but also in policy aspects. Aspects that need attention include: (1) Paying attention to service implementing staff, users, and middle managers to develop creative ideas; (2) Having competent staff in utilizing diverse backgrounds as inspiration for the development of new ideas; (3) Increasing the level of willingness to learn; (4) Capacity building to think creatively with formal techniques; (5) Focus on outcomes; (6) Provide dedicated time and opportunity for staff to think about alternative ideas; (7) Provide a special portal for storing, accessing, and exchanging ideas; (8) Develop a way of thinking outside the box; (9) Competence development of staff and service team; and (10) Provide an adequate intensive system as a forum for innovation.

Public and private organizations have unique characteristics and services, especially in their orientation and purpose. Partnership relationships need to be carried out to maintain harmonization, especially during a pandemic.

Taking decisions and developing projects through this type of collaboration or partnership is very complex. Due to several factors, such as the environment in which an organization grows, the internal characteristics among members, and decision-makers' response to the needs

of this partnership. This strategic partnership is called the Public-Private Partnership, particularly regarding service delivery in the public sector. It can be formulated into the following points: (1) alignment between partners; (2) emphasis on the importance of relationships; (3) includes the provision of shared services; (4) strives to provide the best service; (5) shares risks and benefits together; (6) strives to change partner behavior to be more positive; (7) good communication; trust; (8) emphasis on generating outcomes (9) Cooperation is carried out in the stages of planning, monitoring, problem-solving, and making decisions on strategic partnership units; (10) Be open and honest; (11) Fully support holistic quality improvement; and (12) Benefit all partners.

In this New Normal era, the government is starting to feel the awareness of limited resources to apply policies. This encourages the government to provide access to partnerships with various private sectors, which are seen as the implementation of long-term cooperation and are legalized by official contracts. This partnership is an approach to the procurement of goods and services, which is an alternative for developing infrastructure and public services. The risks, administrative costs, and benefits are shared efficiently and equitably. Other things that need to exist when this partnership is established are trust, transparency, good communication, public participation, and responsive policymakers. Developing this partnership aims to make government policies and programs in the New Normal era run effectively and sustainably. However, this has some problems because the private sector is profit-oriented instead of the public sector. This partnership model still gives the private sector significant authority to

regulate cooperation and agreements made in the agreed-upon object.

This is inseparable from the challenges and problems faced by the government in implementing innovations in this pandemic era by partnering with various other organizations, including: (1) the private sector operates in an external environment of market competition, while the public sector has demands for democracy and accountability from citizens for the services it receives; (2) the orientation of private sector managers that focuses on their stakeholders. (3) The private sector manager has a target for the number of goods sold, turnover, and business development, whereas the public sector manager has a target for position success; and (4) the two sectors' different political dimensions, specifically the lack of a political dimension in the private sector and vice versa.

### **Conclusion**

Conceptually, the public sector has begun to be studied and developed as the economic sector but does not yet have a conceptual framework that can be used as a foothold. In this New Normal era, the government innovated in various public sector services. The APBN budget focuses on dealing with the pandemic, such as broadly related to health, education, and social and economic aspects. This is developing following the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era and the paradigm in public administration, which conceptually adopts many practices from private organizations. The government establishes partnerships with private organizations to study and seek innovative ideas in public service.

Furthermore, public sector innovation during the COVID-19 pandemic is a good momentum for

creating a new culture towards post-modernism and improving work systems in the production process, as well as providing services between stakeholders, the community, and policymakers in all existing sectors. The New Normal era forces people and the government to break old habits by implementing new models with technological requirements, especially in the information aspect. From this, the government should focus on (1) changing the perspective of officials and the public in general; (2) provision of technology and infrastructure; (3) policies that take sides and support the development of innovation; (4) there is a sense of crisis from institutions, bureaucracies, and officials; and (5) a more responsive, visionary, open, and effective approach to public sector leadership.

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