

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the problem

Hygienic and practical drinking water has become an essential need for modern society.¹ People demand drinking water products that are safe, easily accessible, and of high quality to maintain their health. This demand has grown stronger due to increasing health awareness, a practical lifestyle, and high safety standards for bottled drinking water products.

Bottled water has become one of the fastest-growing beverage market segments globally. Recent projections indicate that bottled water has the potential to surpass soft drinks and become the largest beverage category by volume. Even in regions with access to safe tap water or well water, bottled water consumption remains high.²

The bottled water market in Indonesia continues to experience rapid growth, driven by the increasing public awareness of the importance of consuming hygienic and practical drinking water. This growth has become more evident in recent years, supported by the changing lifestyle of urban communities that prioritize convenience and health in their consumption choices.

The bottled water industry in Indonesia currently has four types of products, namely Natural Mineral Water, Mineral Water, Demineralized Water, and Dew Water, with standards regulated by the Indonesian National Standard (SNI). According to data from registered products at the National Agency of Drug and Food Control (Badan POM), there are approximately 7,780 bottled water products with 1,032 producers across Indonesia. Of all the bottled water products, 99.5% are domestic products (BPOM RI MD), with the most common type being Mineral Water, totaling 6,092 products or 78.30%, followed by Demineralized Water with 1,492 products or 19.18%. Natural Mineral Water has only 45 products or 0.58%,

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¹ Benny Rahmawan Noviadji, "Desain Kemasan Tradisional Dalam Konteks Kekinian," *Jurnal Artika* 1, no. 1 (May 25, 2015): 10–21.

² Dyah Suryani, Zahrul Mufrodi, and Asep Rustiawan, "Konsumsi Air Minum Dalam Kemasan (AMDK) Pada Mahasiswa," *Afiasi: Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat* 4, 2 (2019): 55.

and Dew Water has only 3 products or 0.04%. In addition to these four types, there are also 148 products of high pH drinking water, which make up 1.90%.³

The bottled water industry in Indonesia has a fairly healthy level of competition, with over 700 producers operating. Although the level of competition is considered high, the barriers to entry into this industry are relatively low.⁴ Many companies have entered the bottled water industry, ranging from multinational corporations to micro-enterprises focused on the local market. Bottled water has now become a basic necessity for the public, especially in urban areas and regions with limited access to clean water sources. The intense competition poses a significant challenge for each bottled water producer to build brand awareness among consumers, ensuring their product remains the top choice among the various alternatives available in the market.

With the numerous mineral water companies, both large and small, a challenge arises in the form of consumers switching from one brand to another, which impacts the demand for certain brands. Therefore, strategic analysis is needed to help mineral water brands compete and maintain consumer loyalty.⁵

Well-known brands from large companies such as Aqua, Le Minerale, and Cleo dominate a significant portion of the bottled water market in Indonesia amidst intense competition. These companies maintain their position through various innovative marketing strategies, particularly by implementing Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). The IMC approach allows companies to deliver a consistent message across multiple media, ultimately enhancing brand awareness, customer loyalty, and sales. To establish long-term relationships, IMC is used as a tool to build and strengthen the brand. A positive brand relationship can provide benefits while also increasing value for the company's stakeholders.⁶

Currently, many companies in developed countries have implemented the concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) with a broader scope.

³ <https://www.pom.go.id/siaran-pers/lindungi-kesehatan-masyarakat-dengan-sinergi-pengawasan-produk-air-minum-dalam-kemasan-amdk> (diakses pada 2 November 2024)

⁴ Putri Dwi Andiny, Inayati, and Syamsul Hidayat, "Analisis Persaingan Le Mineral Dengan Aqua," *Jurnal Ilmu Manajemen, Bisnis, dan Ekonomi (JIMBE)* 1, 4 (2024): 354.

⁵ Andiny, Inayati, and Hidayat, "Analisis Persaingan Le Mineral Dengan Aqua," 354.

⁶ Anang Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran* (Pasuruan: Qiara Media, 2022), 32.

Company managers view IMC as a way to coordinate and manage their marketing programs. This approach is taken to ensure that messages about the company or brand are consistently delivered to their customers. For many companies, the IMC approach offers significant improvements over traditional marketing methods, which previously treated each element of marketing communication as a separate activity.⁷

Communication strategy serves as a guide for communication planning and management to achieve a specific goal. To reach that goal, the communication strategy must demonstrate how its operations will be carried out tactically. In other words, the approach may vary depending on the situation and conditions at any given time.⁸

Effective communication is crucial in marketing activities. Marketing in the information era is about communication and marketing communication, where both are inseparable.⁹ The success of a brand in increasing product sales is one of the main objectives in modern marketing strategies. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) becomes the key to boosting product sales, encompassing various elements such as advertising, sales promotions, events and experiences, public relations, direct marketing, and personal selling.

In today's modern era, many bottled water companies in Indonesia continue to improve and develop their marketing systems, such as utilizing social media, which allows them to interact directly with consumers and reach a wider audience. Additionally, many companies also conduct sales promotions through e-commerce, offering special deals, discounts, and subscription services to enhance customer interest and encourage purchasing decisions. This demonstrates the effectiveness of IMC in boosting sales and strengthens the important role of IMC implementation in the competitive bottled water industry.

⁷ Morissan M. A., *Periklanan Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu* (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Grup, 2015), 9.

⁸ Onong Uchjana Effendy, Ilmu, Teori Dan Filsafat Komunikasi (Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti, 2003), 301. Onong Uchjana Efendy, *Ilmu, Teori Dan Filsafat Komunikasi* (Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti, 2003), 301.

⁹ Hidayat et al., "Pengembangan Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Industri Kecil Menengah (IKM)," *Journal of Strategic Communication* 1, 2 (2011): 205–221.

Amidas Gontor is one of the business units owned by Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, which represents the implementation of Panca Jangka, particularly in the aspect of Khizanatullah as a source of funding to support the independence of the pesantren.¹⁰ Although Amidas Gontor is a business unit within PMDG, its existence is not entirely focused on achieving financial profit (money-oriented). This is evidenced by the fact that the daily managers of Amidas Gontor are volunteer teachers at PMDG, who do not apply the concept of employees or labor in their work contracts. As a result, the daily managers of Amidas Gontor are not paid like employees in typical bottled water companies.

Amidas Gontor, as one of the business units of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, faces similar challenges in building a competitive brand amidst the dominance of major bottled water brands like Aqua, Le Minerale, and Cleo. The first challenge comes from Amidas Gontor's monthly production volume. Amidas Gontor only produces thousands of cartons per month, which is far less compared to larger bottled water brands such as Le Minerale, which targets a production of 5 million cartons per month.¹¹ The second challenge arises from its marketing strategy through social media. Amidas Gontor has an Instagram account @amidas_gontor but does not heavily engage in marketing through social media. This results in low engagement on the account, which does not support the interactive marketing concept within IMC. This contrasts with other major bottled water brands that heavily promote their products on social media.

Post-pandemic, Amidas Gontor has seen a significant increase in sales across the various products it offers. To maintain consistent product sales growth each year, there is a need for well-planned and integrated marketing strategies, along with consistent and effective marketing efforts. This will allow Amidas Gontor to demonstrate its success in improving its quality and standards for consumers in the market. To create integrated, consistent, and effective marketing,

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¹⁰ Yoka Pradana and Irfan Achmad Zainuri, "Logo Amidas Gontor Sebagai Identitas Merek Produk Pondok Pesantren," *Warta Ikatan Sarjana Komunikasi Indonesia* 5, no. 2 (2022): 131.

¹¹ <https://tirto.id/le-minerale-versus-aqua-bertarung-di-pasar-berlanjut-di-pengadilan-c9Sa>, diakses pada 28 November 2022

strong coordination is required between marketing elements such as advertising, sales promotions, direct marketing, digital marketing, and more.

This research aims to analyze how Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is applied by Amidas Gontor to increase its product sales in the bottled water market. The study seeks to uncover how Amidas can effectively and relevantly utilize IMC strategies, without disregarding the Islamic identity and values inherent in the brand. The primary focus of this research is to explore the IMC elements that have the most significant impact on Amidas' sales growth, as well as to understand the extent to which the IMC approach implemented by Amidas aligns with the market needs and trends within the bottled drinking water industry in Indonesia.

Based on the background above, the author is interested in conducting research on how Amidas Gontor applies Integrated Marketing Communication to increase their sales. Therefore, the author has chosen to conduct research with the title "**Integrated Marketing Communication of Amidas Gontor in Increasing Sales**".

1.2. Problem Formulation

Based on the issues encountered by the author, the research problem in this study is: How does Amidas Gontor apply Integrated Marketing Communication to increase sales?

1.3. Research Objectives

Based on the research problem formulated by the author, the objective of this study is to understand how Amidas Gontor applies Integrated Marketing Communication to increase sales.

1.4. Research Benefits

This research is expected to provide practical and theoretical benefits, both for the parties involved in transportation services and related institutions, including:

1.4.1. Practical Benefits

This research is expected to enrich knowledge, insights, and academic information for Amidas Gontor and other bottled water companies regarding Integrated Marketing Communication in increasing sales, as well as its implementation in the field.

1.4.2. Theoretical Benefits

Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge in the field of marketing communication, particularly in the context of Integrated Marketing Communication. This study is also hoped to enrich the literature related to the analysis of the relationship between Integrated Marketing Communication and the bottled water industry.

1.5. Literature Review

1.5.1. Previous Research

As a reference, the author uses several previous research studies, including:

Hazel Alberta and Lina Sinatra Wijaya conducted a study in 2021 titled “**Analysis of Integrated Marketing Communication Strategies in Increasing Sales and Brand Awareness.**” This study examines integrated marketing communication strategies to enhance sales and brand awareness in the rapidly growing food and beverage sector in Indonesia, focusing on the donut industry. The researchers used a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing purposive sampling for interviews, field observations, and documentation. Their findings revealed that digital media marketing had the most significant impact on increasing sales and brand awareness. However, traditional sales promotion techniques still played a role in driving sales for food and beverage companies. This research highlights the importance of a

balanced approach, combining modern digital strategies with conventional marketing methods to achieve optimal results in the competitive food industry. The study provides valuable insights for businesses in this sector looking to improve their market presence and sales performance through effective integrated marketing communication strategies.¹²

The difference between the author's research and the study mentioned above lies in the research object. The author is researching Amidas Gontor, a business unit within Pondok Modern Gontor that produces bottled water, while the previous study focuses on Toko X in Semarang. However, the similarity between both studies is that both employ a qualitative descriptive method.

R. Satya Setyanugraha conducted a study in 2021 titled "**Analysis of Integrated Marketing Communication at PT. Laxo Global Akses in Building Brand Association.**" The aim of this research was to analyze the implementation of IMC in building the brand image of PT. Laxo Global Akses. The research method used was qualitative, with in-depth interviews and participatory observation of both the company and customers. In his study, Setyanugraha discusses how PT. Laxo Global Akses, an internet service provider (ISP), applies Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies to build brand image. The IMC elements used include direct marketing, personal selling, interactive marketing, and sales promotions. The study shows that integrating various marketing communication elements helps increase customer trust and brand loyalty, even in a competitive market. Laxo's IMC approach focuses on delivering a consistent message to strengthen the brand's advantages in the minds of customers.¹³

¹² Hazel Alberta and Lina Sinatra Wijaya, "Analisis Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu Dalam Meningkatkan Penjualan Dan Brand Awareness," *Jurnal Ilmiah Media, Public Relations, Dan Komunikasi (IMPRESI)* 2, no. 1 (2021).

¹³ R. Satya Setyanugraha, "Analisis Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu PT. Laxo Global Akses Dalam Membangun Brand Association," *Tirtayasa EKONOMIKA* 16, 1 (2021): 27–34.

The difference between the author's research and the study mentioned above lies in the research object and focus. In the previous study, the research object is PT. Laxo Global Akses, whereas the author's research focuses on Amidas Gontor. The focus of the previous research is on the role of IMC in building brand association, while the author's research focuses on the role of IMC in increasing sales. However, the similarity between both studies is the method and theory used. Both the author and the previous study employ a qualitative descriptive method and use the Integrated Marketing Communication theory.

Putu Ratih Aristia Dewi, I Dewa Ayu Sugiarica Joni, and Ade Devia Pradipta conducted a study in 2021 titled **"Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy of The Kayon Jungle Resort in Increasing Brand Awareness."** This research examines The Kayon Jungle Resort, a five-star hotel located in Payangan, Bali, focusing on integrated marketing communication strategies to enhance brand awareness. The resort, aiming to be recognized as the "Best Luxury Honeymoon Resort," implements a marketing mix that includes product, place, price, and promotion, utilizing various promotional tools such as advertising, sales promotions, personal selling, and public relations. Although relatively new, having opened in 2018, the resort has successfully overcome challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and has won several awards. The study uses a qualitative descriptive approach, gathering data through interviews, observations, and documentation. It highlights the importance of effective marketing communication in increasing brand awareness and maintaining competitiveness in a crowded market. Specific strategies noted include targeted promotions for both local and international tourists, interactive marketing via social media, and community engagement initiatives that strengthen the public image.¹⁴

¹⁴ Putu Ratih Aristia Dewi, IDAS Joni, and Ade Devia Pradipta, "Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu the Kayon Jungle Resort Dalam Meningkatkan Brand Awareness," *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 1, no. 2 (2021).

The difference between the author's research and the study mentioned above lies in the research object. The previous study examines a five-star resort or hotel in Bali, while the author's research focuses on Amidas Gontor. The similarity between both studies is the research method. Both studies use a qualitative descriptive approach.

The next study referenced is a journal written in 2020 by R. Nuruliah Kusumasari and Annissa Afrilia, titled **"Integrated Marketing Communication Strategy of J&C Cookies Bandung in Increasing Sales."** This research examines a company operating in the food industry. The study discusses the integrated marketing communication strategy of J&C Cookies Bandung. The findings reveal that J&C Cookies implements a strategy that includes planning, execution, and evaluation, while applying elements of integrated marketing communication such as advertising, personal selling, sales promotions, direct selling, events & sponsorships, and public relations. These efforts have contributed to an increase in sales for J&C Cookies Bandung.¹⁵

The difference between the author's research and the study mentioned above lies in the research object. The author focuses on Amidas Gontor, a business unit within Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, while the previous study examines J&C Cookies, a company in the food industry. The similarity between both studies is the research method used, which is the qualitative descriptive method.

The last study referenced by the researcher is a study conducted by Ardiyansyah, Fahrizal, and Adila Solida in 2022, titled **"Integrated Marketing Communication of MSMEs in the Tugu Keris Siginjai Tourist Area in the New Normal Era."** The aim of this study was to analyze the adaptation of integrated marketing communication strategies by MSMEs in the Tugu Keris Siginjai tourist area in Jambi City during the new normal era. The research method used a qualitative approach, with data

¹⁵ R Nuruliah Kusumasari and Annissa Afrilia, "Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu J&C Cookies Bandung Dalam Meningkatkan Penjualan," *Jurnal Sains Manajemen* 2, no. 1 (2020).

collection techniques including interviews and literature review. The analysis was descriptive, based on the concept of integrated marketing communication. The findings of the study revealed that MSMEs adopted IMC components such as advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, and public relations. However, the implementation was not optimal due to budget limitations. Digital marketing strategies emerged as an effective alternative in the face of these limitations. The IMC strategies implemented helped MSMEs enhance customer relationships through digital marketing and creative promotions. The main challenge identified was the high costs associated with large-scale promotions.¹⁶

The difference between this study and the author's research lies in both the research object and focus. This study focuses on the role of IMC in enhancing customer relationships during the new normal era, while the author's research focuses on the role of IMC in increasing sales. The research object in this study is the Tugu Keris Siginjai Tourist Area, while the author's research object is Amidas Gontor.

1.5.2. Conceptual Foundations

1.5.2.1. Marketing Communications

The oldest definition of marketing refers to human activities of exchanging goods to meet basic needs. This exchange was traditionally based on customs, where the value of goods exchanged was determined by mutual agreement between both parties, for example, one kilogram of salt could be exchanged for a certain amount of pepper. This activity is known in historical records as "barter," where goods are exchanged directly without the use of money. Bartering was primarily intended to fulfill daily life needs. Even in modern times, we can still find communities that use

¹⁶ Ardiyansyah, Fahrizal, and Adila Solida, "Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu UMKM Area Wisata Tugu Keris Siginjai Di Era New Normal," *Ekonomis: Journal of Economics and Business* 6, 1 (2022): 328–332.

the barter system, one of which is in the Floating Market of Lok Baintan, South Kalimantan.¹⁷

Marketing communication is a means through which companies attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands they sell.¹⁸ Marketing communication has two important elements: "Communication" and "Marketing." Communication is the process of delivering or receiving messages from one person to another, either directly or indirectly, through written, verbal, or sign language.¹⁹ Meanwhile, marketing is a concept that involves a mental attitude, a way of thinking that guides you in doing something not only by selling goods but also selling ideas, careers, places (tourism, homes, industrial locations), laws, services (transportation, flights, haircuts, health), entertainment, and non-profit activities such as social and religious foundations.²⁰

From these two definitions, we can conclude that marketing communication is a means through which companies attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands they sell. Marketing communication represents the "voice" of the company and its brand, and it is a tool through which companies can create dialogue and build relationships with consumers. For consumers, marketing communication can inform or show them how and why a product is used, by what type of person, as well as where and when.²¹

Marketing consists of a marketing mix strategy, where an organization or company develops to transfer value through exchange for its customers. Kotler and Armstrong (2008) argue that "The marketing mix

¹⁷ Redi Panuju, *Komunikasi Pemasaran: Pemasaran Sebagai Gejala Komunikasi Komunikasi Sebagai Strategi Pemasaran* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2019), 1.

¹⁸ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 8.

¹⁹ Husaini Usman, *Manajemen Teori Praktik, Dan Riset Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2015).

²⁰ MA Morrisson, *Periklanan Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu* (Kencana, 2015).

²¹ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 2–3.

is a set of controlled tactical marketing tools that a company blends to elicit the desired response in the target market."²²

Abdul Ghafur explains that Allah Subhaanahu Wata'aala says in Surah As-Saff, verses 10-11, that the best form of trade or business is to strive in the way of Allah with wealth and soul. The verse reads:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾ تَأْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۖ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

*"O you who have believed, shall I guide you to a transaction that will save you from a painful punishment? (10) [It is that] you believe in Allāh and His Messenger and strive in the cause of Allāh with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if you only knew. (11)."*²³

With the spirit of this verse, Amidas Gontor provides infaq as a form of charitable donation for Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor and jihad fi-sabilillah, by setting an example in business through dakwah (Islamic preaching) and teaching Islamic values in its implementation. Amidas Gontor strives to promote the economy, community empowerment, and public welfare.

1.5.2.2. Integrated Marketing Communications

Marketing communication requires the right process to manage the company's operations due to the increasingly competitive business development. Effective communication is key for consumers to understand the company well. To achieve the company's goals, one strategy that many

²² Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 5.

²³ A Ghafur, "Etika Bisnis Dalam Perspektif Islam," *Iqtishodiyah: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Islam* 1, 1 (2018): 7.

companies apply to increase the number of consumers is Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). IMC is a process used by companies to communicate their products to consumers effectively.²⁴

IMC (Integrated Marketing Communication) is a concept of marketing communication planning that introduces added value through a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic role of various communication disciplines, such as general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations. It combines these disciplines to deliver clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact.²⁵

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a strategy that unifies various forms of communication and promotion to deliver a consistent message to the target audience. The main goal of IMC is to ensure that all communications conducted by the company are coordinated and convey a clear and consistent message across all marketing channels. IMC is a total marketing communication strategy aimed at building strong customer relationships by demonstrating how the company and its products can help customers solve their problems.²⁶

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2005), Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is a concept where a company integrates and coordinates various communication channels to deliver a clear, consistent, and persuasive message about the company and its products.²⁷

As mentioned above, the fundamental concept of IMC is communication. Through communication, IMC seeks to maximize positive messages and minimize negative messages about a brand, with the goal of creating and supporting brand relationships. To build long-term relationships, IMC is also used to develop and strengthen the brand.

²⁴ Donni Juni Priansa, "Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu Pada Era Media Sosial," *Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia* 358 (2017): 93.

²⁵ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 30.

²⁶ Kusumasari and Afrilia, "Strategi Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu J&C Cookies Bandung Dalam Meningkatkan Penjualan," 100.

²⁷ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 31.

In Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC), several marketing concepts are needed, including:

1. Advertising

Advertising is the most common form of communication within IMC. It involves using mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and digital media to convey messages to a wide audience. Advertising aims to increase brand awareness, create brand image, and encourage consumers to take action, such as making a purchase or participating in promotions. Advertising is also important for reaching audiences at scale with a relatively low cost per contact.

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2008), advertising is all forms of nonpersonal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services with specific sponsorships. According to Terence A Shimp (2003), advertising is any form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service or idea that is paid for by a single known sponsor.²⁸

The characteristics of the advertisement are:

- It can reach geographically dispersed consumers.
- Can repeat messages multiple times.
- It is impersonal, and one-way communication.
- It can be very expensive for some types of media.²⁹

There are several advertising objectives, which are as follows:

- Informative Advertising
- Persuasive Advertising
- Reminder Advertising
- Reinforcement Advertising.³⁰

²⁸ Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu*, 190.

²⁹ Didin Burhanuddin Rabbani, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 59.

³⁰ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*. 269.

2. Direct Marketing

Direct marketing involves direct communication with individual consumers to generate a response or transaction. This can be done through direct mail, email, phone calls, and digital media. Direct marketing allows companies to target their messages specifically to different market segments based on demographic data, preferences, or consumer behavior. The advantage of direct marketing is the ability to track and measure consumer responses directly, enabling quick adjustments to marketing strategies.

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2008), direct marketing is a relationship with individual consumers that is carefully targeted to obtain a direct response and build lasting customer relationships using various tools and media to communicate directly with specific consumers.³¹ Direct marketing is a marketing system that utilizes one or more advertising media to generate a variety of measurable responses at a specific location. In this direct business communication, various non-personal tools, such as email marketing, telemarketing, internet marketing, fax, and others, are used to obtain direct responses from customers or potential customers. The characteristics of direct marketing are as follows:

- Nonpublic: The message is targeted to specific customers or potential customers.
- Customized: The message is tailored to appeal to specific customers or potential customers.
- Up to date: The message is prepared quickly and delivered to specific customers or potential customers in a timely manner.
- Interactive: The message can be modified based on the response from a specific customer or potential customer.³²

³¹ Sri Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu* (Jakarta: FEB-UP Press, 2017), 339.

³² Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 64.

Djaslim Saladin (2006) explains several forms of direct marketing, including the following:

- Face to Face Selling.

Face-to-face sales is a type of sales conducted through visits made by the seller. This form of sales allows the seller to tailor the product presentation to suit the needs, preferences, or conditions of the potential customer. However, face-to-face sales require more human resources (HR), time, and effort compared to other forms of direct marketing, so this approach is typically used only for high-value products or specific markets that require a personal approach.

- Catalog Marketing

Catalog Marketing is a form of marketing where products or services are promoted using printed or digital catalogs that contain detailed information about the products, including prices, specifications, and purchasing instructions. These catalogs can be sent directly through mail, available in physical stores, or accessed online through websites or apps.

- Kiosk Marketing

Kiosk Marketing is a form of marketing that uses kiosks or stands as a medium to attract attention and serve customers directly. These kiosks are typically placed in high-traffic locations such as shopping centers, airports, hotels, malls, or other public places.

- Direct Mail Marketing

Direct Mail Marketing is a promotional activity aimed at goods or services directly sent to consumers or customers through media such as mail, audiovisual, fax, and others, with the hope of generating direct transactions. The content of the message may

include offers, announcements, notifications, or other items sent to an individual with a specific address.³³

3. Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is a form of direct persuasion through the use of various incentives that can be arranged to stimulate immediate product purchases or increase the quantity of goods purchased by customers.³⁴ According to Kennedy & Soemanagara (2009), sales promotion is defined as a promotional program that directly leads to a shift in the value of products or services through the strength of sales and distribution, with the main objective being direct sales.³⁵

Sales promotion is a marketing communication strategy focused on encouraging consumers to purchase products or services through short-term incentives. Examples of sales promotions include discounts, coupons, direct gifts, and contests. The goal of sales promotion is to increase sales in the short term and can attract new customers or encourage repeat purchases from existing customers. This promotion can also be used to introduce new products or increase product awareness in an existing market.

The characteristics of sales promotion are communication, incentives, and invitations. Most sales promotions are aimed at changing consumer buying behavior immediately.³⁶ Sales promotions can increase sales in a short period of time, encourage consumers to try new products, and enhance customer loyalty. However, excessive sales promotions can reduce the perceived value of a product. Therefore, it is important to maintain a balance between the two.

4. Personal Selling

³³ Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu*, 342.

³⁴ Agus Hermawan, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*. (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2012), 185.

³⁵ Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu*, 244.

³⁶ Didin Burhanuddin Rabbani, *Komunikasi Pemasaran* (Padang: PT. Global Eksekutif Teknologi, 2022), 63.

Personal Selling is a form of sales promotion conducted in a two-way, face-to-face communication or a personal presentation between the seller and the buyer to introduce the offered product, persuade, and influence the potential buyer with the goal of achieving a sale. According to Kotler & Armstrong (2001), personal selling is a personal presentation by the company's salespeople (sales force) to successfully facilitate sales and build relationships with customers.³⁷

Personal selling involves direct interaction between the sales force and the consumer. It is a highly personal form of communication, making it particularly effective for products or services that require in-depth explanations or demonstrations. Personal selling allows the salesperson to tailor the marketing message according to the individual needs of the consumer and helps build strong relationships with potential customers. The advantages of personal selling include immediate feedback from consumers and the ability to address objections or questions in real-time.

Personal selling is a highly effective tool for building preferences, confidence, and purchase actions, but it is difficult to reduce costs due to its relation to the number of sellers. Personal selling has three benefits as follows:

1) Personal conformation:

- It encompasses dynamic, harmonious, direct, and interactive relationships between two or more customers.
- Personal observation fosters the ability to adjust to one another.

2) Cultivation:

- It allows for the emergence of various types of relationships, ranging from sales relationships to friendships.

³⁷ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 223.

- Personal selling will be highly effective when the seller prioritizes the customer's interests to maintain long-term purchasing relationships.

3) Response:

- It makes potential buyers feel obligated to listen to the seller's conversation.
- Potential buyers sometimes feel "forced" to respond, even if it's just a polite "thank you."³⁸

According to Swasta (2002), there are five types of personal selling, including:

- 1) Trade Selling: This type of selling occurs when producers and wholesalers allow retailers to operate and improve the distribution of their products.
- 2) Missionary Selling: This selling method aims to increase sales by encouraging buyers to purchase goods from the company's distributors.
- 3) Technical Selling: This type of selling focuses on enhancing sales by offering advice and recommendations to the end buyers of products and services.
- 4) New Business Selling: This type of selling aims to open new transactions by converting potential buyers into actual buyers. This selling method is often used by insurance companies.
- 5) Responsive Selling: Sales in this category are expected to respond to buyers' demands. Two types of sales in this category are route driving and retail.³⁹

³⁸ Sri Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu*. 272

³⁹ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*. 229-230

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2001), there are six stages or steps in personal selling, including:

1) Prospecting.

In this stage, marketers are required to find customers who represent the company's target segment.

2) Pre-approach.

Once potential customers are identified, marketers must build a relationship to establish trust.

3) Presentation and demonstration

In this stage, marketers need to show how the product being sold meets the needs of potential customers.

4) Overcoming objections

Usually, potential customers have objections to buying the product. In this case, the marketer must be able to cope by providing an offer or in other ways.

5) Follow-up and maintenance

Marketers must be able to keep customers loyal to the product.

6) Closing

Marketers must be able to decide whether customers want to buy the product or not, this moment must be done very carefully because it greatly influences the purchase decision.⁴⁰

5. Interactive Marketing

Interactive marketing here is more focused on how a company is able or not able to communicate with its customers or is able to provide good solutions, which are related to the use of products. In this case, interactive marketing is also related to customer relationship management. Examples of the application of

⁴⁰ Firmansyah, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*. 231-232

interactive marketing are the creation of social media accounts, chatbots or live chats, personalized emails, and conducting online surveys and feedback.

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), interactive marketing is an online activity and program designed to engage customers or prospects and directly or indirectly increase awareness, improve image, or create sales of products and services. Kotler and Keller (2012) also stated that online (interactive) marketing is a company's effort to market products and build customer relationships through the internet.

Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that interactive marketing is a tool for online promotion with the aim of maintaining good relationships with consumers and to distribute goods and services. The functions of interactive marketing are:

1) Personalization

The concept of personalization is part of one part of the marketing mix that is contained in the need for recognition and identification of certain customers in building good relationships with customers.

2) Privacy

Privacy is also one of the elements of the marketing mix that is very closely related to personalization. The main task that must be carried out by the internet marketing strategy is to develop policies above the access procedures for the collection of information.

3) Customer service

Customer service is one of the needs of various activities that are needed in the transactional process.

4) Community

A community is a group of identities, which interact with a common purpose. Customers will be able to be part of the community where they will interact with each other, therefore

community development is a task that must be done by all businesses.

5) Site

Interactive marketing interaction on networks or digital media, namely the internet. Both interacting and relationships need a suitable place, which is available at any time, i.e. a digital location to interact digitally. Locations like this can be called sites.

6) Security

The function of security in a transaction is a very important function when the transaction will be carried out through the network or internet media.

7) Sales Promotion

Sales promotion will be done extensively in traditional marketing. This function will take into account the marketer's ability to think creatively, which will require a lot of work and inspiration to find new possibilities in developing a plan to promote efficiently.

8) Word of Mouth marketing

Word of mouth (WOM) can be in the form of comments or recommendations that the customer disseminates based on the experience he or she receives, having a strong influence on the decision-making made by the other party. One form of promotion in marketing is word of mouth. Word of mouth becomes a reference that shapes customer expectations. As part of the marketing communication mix, word of mouth communication is one of the most influential strategies in consumer decisions in using products or services.

6. Public Relation

Public relations (PR) is a communication strategy aimed at building and maintaining a positive image of a company or brand in the eyes of the public, including consumers, employees, and other

stakeholders. PR activities include press releases, press conferences, sponsorships, and community outreach events. This component focuses on building long-term relationships with the public and helps manage brand perceptions during crises or controversial issues. According to Larson & Potter (1995), public relations encompasses various programs designed to promote or protect the image of a company and its products.⁴¹

There are basic requirements that must be possessed by someone who performs the PR function, including:

1) Ability to communicate

Communication skills for a PR professional, both oral and written, are essential. This includes the ability to speak in public, such as giving presentations, conducting interviews to gather facts and data, and being interviewed by the press or journalists as a news source. In terms of writing, a PR professional must be capable of writing press releases, reports, speeches for management, public service announcements, brochures or flyers, and other forms of written communication.

2) Ability to organize

Managerial or leadership skills can be defined as the ability to anticipate problems both within and outside the company, including the ability to develop activity plans and implement them effectively.

3) Ability to get on with people

The ability to socialize or build relationships means being able to connect and collaborate with a variety of people and maintain good communication with individuals of different or similar levels.

4) Personality integrity

⁴¹ Didin Burhanuddin Rabbani, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 64.

A complete or honest personality means that a PR professional must have high credibility, being reliable and trustworthy to others, and being accepted as someone with an authentic and honest character.

5) Imagination

Having imagination (lots of ideas and creativity) means that a PR professional must have a broad perspective, being able to understand the underlying issues, no matter how complex they may be.

A good company is one that is able to achieve its vision and mission maximally. Similarly, PR practitioners are tasked with handling crises of trust and restoring the company's positive image. To ensure the vision and mission are running smoothly, efficient work management is needed, taking into account factors such as objectives, costs, facilities, time, and effort. In other words, PR requires a working method that is an essential condition for achieving its goals.

As the company evolves, it also develops marketing public relations (MPR). MPR serves a specific field, which is the marketing department. According to Kotler & Keller (2012), MPR plays an important role in directly supporting promotions and the creation of the company's or product's image. This role seems to go beyond simple publicity, as MPR has many other roles, such as:

- Assisting in the launch of new products/services
- Helping reposition an established product
- Building interest in a product/service category
- Influencing a specific target group
- Defending products/services that have faced public issues
- Building a corporate image that is well-reflected in its products/services.⁴²

⁴² Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu*, 308.

7. Word of Mouth Marketing

Word of Mouth Marketing is the communication about products and services between people who are considered independent of the company that provides the product or service, in a medium that will be considered independent of the company. This communication can be a conversation, or just a one-way testimonial. For example, talking in person, by phone, e-mail, listgroup, or other means of communication.

Word of Mouth Marketing is a person-to-person oral, written or electronic communication related to the characteristics or experience of buying or using a product or service. The definition of word of mouth according to the Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) is a marketing effort that triggers the end consumer to discuss, promote, recommend, and sell products/brands to other customers. According to Rosen (2000), there are six elements that a product/service must have to be able to produce word of mouth positively and continuously, namely:

- 1) The product/service must be able to evoke an emotional response.
- 2) The product/service or brand must be able to provide the effect of something delight or excitement.
- 3) The product/service must have something that can advertise itself or inspire someone to ask about it.
- 4) The product must be compatible with other products, especially it can be applied in products that rely on technology.⁴³

According to Lovelock & Wirtz (2007), there are 5 strategies to stimulate positive and persuasive comments from customers, namely:

- 1) Refer buyers and someone who is widely known in the community.

⁴³ Widyastuti, *Manajemen Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu*. 161.

- 2) Create attractive promotions that make people talk about the service excellence that can be provided by the company.
- 3) Develop intensive reward schemes such as offering existing customers some special services or service discounts as a reward for their efforts in referring the company to new customers.
- 4) Offer promotions that are able to encourage customers to invite other customers to use the company's services.
- 5) Presenting and publishing testimonials that stimulate WOM.⁴⁴

WOM communication is not always positive, WOM can also cause negative comments from customers who are disappointed with a product. Negative WOM has a greater influence than positive WOM. Negative WOM can occur for two reasons, namely:

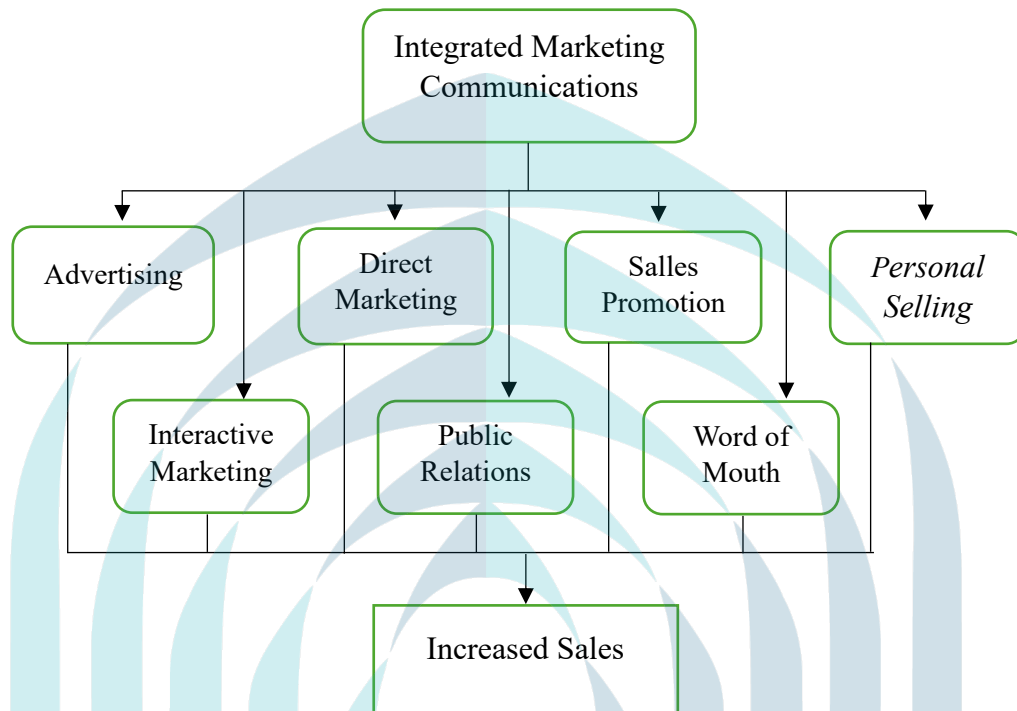
- 1) Customer experience with poor product performance, poor service, high prices, or unfriendly sellers.
- 2) Negative rumors about a product or company.⁴⁵



⁴⁴ Didin Burhanuddin Rabbani, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 144.

⁴⁵ Didin Burhanuddin Rabbani, *Komunikasi Pemasaran*, 145.

1.5.3. Thinking Framework



1.6. Research Methods

1.6.1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative research methods are research methods based on postpositivist or interpretive philosophy, or constructive used to research on natural object conditions, where the researcher is the key instrument, data collection techniques are carried out by triangulation (a combination of observation, interviews, documentation), the data obtained tends to be qualitative data, data analysis is inductive or qualitative, and qualitative research results can be potential findings and problems, the uniqueness of objects, the meaning of an event, social processes and interactions, the certainty of data correctness, phenomenal construction, and phenomenal findings, and hypothesis findings.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Sugiyono and Puji Lestari, *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2021), 52.

According to Sugiyono, the qualitative research method functions to identify something new, so the research is exploratory and does not make measurements. The new findings can be in the form of an overview of a situation (descriptive), categorization or clarification of a situation (comparative) and the relationship between one category and another category (constructive).⁴⁷ The researcher chose a qualitative method because he would understand Amidas Gontor's Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) in increasing sales.

The object of this research is Amidas Gontor. The data used in this qualitative research uses a type of written data obtained through interviews with sources which is used as the main data. In the interview process, it is carried out in depth and is open or developed according to the informant's answers. In addition to the written data, other data used in this study are other additional data such as documents and others. The data analysis used in this study is data triangulation data analysis which includes observation, interviews, and documentation.

The subject of the research is the actor or person who provides the information needed by the researcher and is related to the research. According to Lofland, the main data in qualitative research focuses on words and actions as core elements, while other elements such as documents are considered complementary data.⁴⁸ In choosing a subject, the researcher has made several certain considerations. This particular consideration is such as an individual who is considered to have extensive knowledge and understanding related to Amidas Gontor, or because of his high status or position in the organizational structure so that it is expected to be able to help make it easier for researchers to find the data and information needed. Therefore, researchers have determined the criteria that should be considered capable and understand Amidas Gontor well.

⁴⁷ Lestari, *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi*, 466.

⁴⁸ J. Moleong Lexy, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2021).

The research subjects that will be researched by the researcher are:

- 1) Aswangga Fausta Fachri as Production Manager of Amidas Gontor
- 2) Wildan Taqiyuddin as Marketing Manager of Amidas Gontor

The location of this research is located in Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, Gontor Village, Mlarak District, Ponorogo Regency, East Java. The time plan needed to conduct the research starting from October 2024 until the completion of writing this research is as follows:

Table 1.1 Research Time Plan Schedule

No.	Activities	October				November				Desember				January				February				March
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1
1	Determining the Title																					
2	Proposal Submission																					
3	Drafting and Revision																					
4	Thesis Proposal Exam																					
5	Interview Draft																					
6	Interview with Informant																					
7	Writing Interview Results																					
8	Data analysis																					
9	Data Input																					
10	Thesis Examination																					

1.6.2. Data Collection Methods

The data collection method is the most important thing carried out in a research, because it aims to obtain data which is the main goal in the research. The researcher used 3 data collection methods, namely;

1.6.2.1. Observation

Observation is the basis of all science. Scientists can only work based on data, which is facts about the real world obtained through observation. Observation is the activity of directly observing an object to see closely the activities carried out by the object.⁴⁹

In this study, the researcher will observe firsthand how the integrated marketing communication process that occurs at Amidas Gontor, namely direct marketing, sales promotion, personal selling, interactive marketing, advertising, public relations, and word of mouth is applied at Amidas Gontor.

1.6.2.2. Interview

An interview is a form of interaction between two or more parties that involves the exchange of information and ideas through a question-and-answer process, with the aim of understanding and deducing the meaning of a particular topic.⁵⁰ Interviews are used as a data collection technique if the researcher wants to conduct a preliminary study to find out the problems that must be researched, but also if the researcher wants to know more in-depth things from the respondents. In qualitative research, participatory observation techniques are often combined with in-depth interviews. During the observation, the researcher also conducted interviews with the people in it.

In this study, the researcher will use semi-structured interviews where the implementation is more free. This type of interview is often referred to as a directed or freely guided interview, where the interview process is carried out with flexibility but still focuses on the subject matter that has been formulated beforehand.⁵¹ The purpose of this interview is to

⁴⁹ Rachmat Kriyantono, *Teknik Praktis Riset Komunikasi* (Jakarta: Prenada Media Grup, 2014). 64

⁵⁰ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kombinasi (Mixed Methods)* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2016), 308.

⁵¹ Rachmat Kriyantono, P. D., *Teknis Praktis Riset Komunikasi Kuantitatif Dan Kualitatif*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2006), 291.

find problems more openly, where the interviewee is asked for their opinions, and ideas. In this interview, the researcher will listen carefully and record what is stated by the informant or resource person, even the researcher will also record all the information conveyed to get maximum results.

1.6.2.3. Documentation

Documentation comes from the term document, which refers to written objects. It refers to a method of collecting data by researching various written sources, such as books, magazines, official documents, regulations, and so on.⁵² According to Sugiyono, the document is a record of events that have passed. Documents can be in the form of writings, drawings, or monumental works of a person.⁵³ Documentation is considered an indirect data collection technique, as the researcher does not interact directly with the subject, but utilizes existing data as an object of analysis.

One of the data instruments used after conducting in-depth observations and interviews is to use documentation, because the data obtained will be more credible or trustworthy. The documentation that will be used by the researcher is the collection of data obtained during the activity, both in the form of writings and images as well as archives belonging to Amidas Gontor.

1.6.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the organization and structuring of data collected from field records, interviews, and other sources in a systematic manner so that it is easy to understand and share. This process includes organizing the data, breaking it down into smaller components, synthesizing information, identifying patterns, prioritizing key insights, interpreting findings, and drawing conclusions.⁵⁴

⁵² Mundir, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif & Kuantitatif* (Jember: STAIN Press, 2013), 186.

⁵³ Lestari, *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi*, 539.

⁵⁴ Kriyantono, *Teknik Praktis Riset Komunikasi*, 355.

In qualitative research, data analysis is carried out before the fieldwork begins, during the fieldwork process, and after the completion of the fieldwork activities. This study uses the data analysis method proposed by Miles and Huberman. According to their approach, qualitative data analysis occurs interactively and continuously until all the necessary data is collected and fully analyzed. The main activities involved in this process include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion extraction and verification.⁵⁵

1.6.3.1. Data Reduction

Data reduction is a process in which the data that has already been collected is filtered, simplified, and grouped in a way that allows researchers to focus on the aspects that are most relevant to the research objectives. This is important because the data obtained from research, especially qualitative, is often abundant and complex, requiring filtering to make it easier to analyze and present.

Every researcher has a goal to achieve when reducing data. In qualitative research, the main focus is on finding new things. Therefore, when something unknown, unstructured, or seemingly unfamiliar is identified, these aspects must be the main concern of the researcher during the data reduction process.⁵⁶ According to Sugiyono, reducing data means summarizing, selecting and sorting out the main things, focusing on the important things, looking for themes and patterns.⁵⁷ In this case, the researcher will collect all the data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation, then organize the data so that it is easy to understand, as well as sort and select the main things to be researched.

⁵⁵ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013), 244.

⁵⁶ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*, 249.

⁵⁷ Prof. Dr. Sugiyono and Dr. Puji Lestari, M.Si., *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2021). 548.

1.6.3.2. Data Presentation

After the data is reduced, the researcher will present the data. In qualitative research, data presentation can be carried out in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, and the like. The purpose of data presentation is to simplify complex data, make it easier to understand, and help in decision-making. The researcher will present the data that has been obtained and reduced in accordance with the theory used in the research.

1.6.3.3. Data Verification

According to Miles and Huberman, the step after the presentation of the data is the drawing of conclusions and verification.⁵⁸ The initial conclusions presented are still provisional and will change if strong supporting evidence is not found at the next stage of data collection. After reducing and presenting the data obtained, the researcher will draw conclusions based on the combination of information received that has been compiled based on the researcher's point of view to strengthen this research.

1.6.4. Data Validity

In qualitative research, findings or data can be declared valid if there is no difference between what the researcher reports and what actually happens to the object being studied. Therefore, credibility or validity of data is needed. The technique used by the researcher is the triangulation method. Triangulation is a data validity examination technique that uses something outside of the data to evaluate or compare data.⁵⁹

In this study, the researcher will use 2 types of triangulations, namely;

1. Source Triangulation

Namely by collecting data from various sources so that the data obtained is in accordance with the facts that are happening in the field.

⁵⁸ Prof. Dr. Sugiyono and Dr. Puji Lestari, M.Si., *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi*, 554.

⁵⁹ J. Moleong Lexy, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*, 330.

Triangulation of this source will be carried out by searching for the truth of the data through 3 sources or informants from Amidas Gontor.

2. Methods Triangulation

Namely by conducting several data collection methods such as observations, interviews, and documentation to get a more complete and clearer picture.

