

**Group Guidance Based on Ibn Arabi's Cosmology for Students' Self-Improvement: A Semantic Analysis on the Writing of Vocational High School Students in Purwokerto**

**Ramadhan Azkiya Salim<sup>1</sup>, Nur Azizah<sup>2</sup>**

Islamic Guidance and Counseling Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah and Science,  
Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

Islamic Guidance and Counseling Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah and Science,  
Universitas Islam Negeri Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>

E-mail: [ramadhanaskiya@gmail.com](mailto:ramadhanaskiya@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>, [nurazizah@uinsaizu.ac.id](mailto:nurazizah@uinsaizu.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

Correspondent Author: Ramadhan Azkiya Salim, [ramadhanaskiya@gmail.com](mailto:ramadhanaskiya@gmail.com)

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**Abstract**

Today's teenagers need to be prepared to face self-development challenges that affect their motivation and sense of meaning in life. This study examines group guidance grounded in Ibn Arabi's cosmology to improve students' self-improvement through the semantic analysis of handwriting in vocational high schools. The research method uses a qualitative case study with handwriting documentation and in-depth interviews. The study subjects were five students from class XI MPLB 1 at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto. Data analysis was carried out semantically to reveal implied meanings and spiritual values. The study results showed that group guidance encouraged students to write about improving their quality of life, life skills, health, and continuous improvement, reflecting motivation and the meaning of life. Group guidance based on Ibn Arabi's cosmology can support students' self-improvement. Guidance and counselling teachers can develop a group guidance model based on Ibn Arabi's cosmology to more meaningfully support students' self-development.

**Keywords:** group guidance, self improvement, ibn arabi cosmology, lexical semantics

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, there are phenomena within the community, specifically among the youth (students), that stem from an identity crisis about the essence of self. The phenomenon is the massive reduction of the meaning of practising tafakur in adjusting life as a faithful servant (Roehlkepartain et al., 2025). Some information from cyberspace still lacks a transparent, accountable reference source, so many young people are then left dissatisfied and distracted by the virtual world, which is increasingly massive in providing understandings that are not worthy of being used as a spectacle.

Social media is in the spotlight regarding a trend that normalizes moral degradation. Marked by social media that shows obscene acts, negative emotional quarrels that continue brawls, and inappropriate romance dramas can also be said to be the second factor that results in moral degradation in children and adolescents (students). Thus, human relationships are ultimately coloured by the decline of ethical values and the reduction of constant reflection (Hossain, 2024).

Vocational students are in a challenging phase of late adolescent development, academically, emotionally, and socially. The pressure to be ready for work, environmental pressures, and self-discovery often lead to confusion and a lack of motivation to develop. This condition underscores the importance of strengthening self-improvement, namely the ability to recognise one's potential, set life goals, and develop personal skills (Andrei, 2023), on an ongoing basis. Without proper intervention, students risk stagnation in self-development, low self-confidence, and difficulties in navigating the workplace and social life. Therefore, an approach that can engage students' inner and reflective aspects is needed so that the self-improvement process can occur fully and meaningfully (Alt et al., 2022).

As well as research conducted by (Anggraini et al (2024) said which departs from the same discussion, namely about self improvement or self development, improving self quality and discussing the meaning contained in the book "Is It a Bad Habit or a Good Habit" has a positive nuance in order to invite and help readers to constantly develop good habits to help readers about awareness of the vast possibilities of life. Furthermore, Tingkat (2020), said about research discusses the benefits of optimising student self-development by publishing student achievements through mass media. Social media that connotes awareness of student self-development. Then, Butler (2024) research on self-development with implementation using humanistic learning theory, with the output of student independence, awareness to express opinions, accompanied by responsibility.

The difference between these previous studies is that they are more focused on optimising self-development, achieved through extracurricular equality and the publication of achievements, rather than through group guidance in Ibn Arabi's cosmology as a form of student self-improvement. In the realm of Sufi cosmology, humans and the cosmos are placed in a position that reflects God's self-manifestation. Ibn 'Arabi's thought, between humans and the cosmos, is a correspondence between fellow subjects, who are united in manifesting the nature and name of God, so that the reflection of His emanations is preserved on earth. Humans, imagined by Ibn 'Arabi as a microcosm and nature as a macrocosm, are placed as two entities that can never be separated. In his view, humans are part of the cosmos or a miniature version.

Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Arabi, also known as 'Asy Syaykh al Akbar' (The Great Master), because he established a systematic approach to Sufi thought. There is little information available about Ibn al-Arabi's personal life. He received his early education in Murcia and studied under Sufi masters who had passed away in cities such as



Alexandria, Sair, Damascus, and Baghdad. The knowledge he acquired was studied and gained over a considerable period, particularly in schools and religious institutions, where it was taught in higher education. References to his philosophy can be found in the works of modern era philosophers such as Sinposa and Toland, who sought to conceptualise and systematically organise his philosophical ideas (Azamovich, 2025).

Research that became the author's preliminary study in examining the cosmological thoughts of Ibn al 'Arabi, the first study by Taufiqurrohman (Effendi, 2021), focuses on Ibn al 'Arabi's cosmological model of divinity, which is relevant to the development of the times and is a view that guides humans towards the 'presence' of Allah. Ibn al'Arabi's cosmological model of divinity is transcendent, both theologically and mystically. Then, research by Sayari (Khalil, 2023), as well as the theory of unity of existence in the texts of Ibn 'Arabi, compiles these concepts and theories in order to describe the systemic network of actions and reactions in the cosmos. Subsequently, further research was conducted, Yaqin (2021) which discusses the concept of Ibn 'Arabi and al-Ishaqi, the relationship between humans and the universe is an interconnection between subjects that unite in revealing the attributes and names of Allah, so that the reflection of His radiance remains eternal on earth.

Likewise, human relations with nature (cosmos) are coloured by the destruction of the natural order, and human relations with God are also coloured by the absence of the heart in worship and in doing good deeds. Based on the description above, research on Ibn Arabi's cosmology as a form of self-improvement is important. The call to always reflect is sacredly enshrined in one of the verses of the Quran, namely Q.S. Al Imran, Verse 190 (Qutub, 2023).

In this context, the identity crisis faced by modern teenagers at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto is influenced by excessive exposure to unverified social media content. This phenomenon contributes to the degradation of spiritual and moral values. To address this, guidance is needed to balance students' cognitive and spiritual needs. Ibn Arabi's cosmology is based on the concepts of "*tajalli*" and "*wahdat al wujud*", which view the universe as a manifestation of the Divine. Education grounded in this cosmology encourages individuals to reflect on and discover the meaning of existence. In the context of students at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto who are searching for their identity, this approach is relevant for guiding holistic self-improvement. This study integrates Ibn Arabi's cosmology in group guidance and uses semantic analysis of students' writings as reflection and self-improvement indicators. Therefore, this study aims to examine Ibn Arabi's cosmology-based group guidance for improving students' self-improvement through a semantic analysis of the writings of vocational high school students.

## METHOD

This study utilises a qualitative single-case study approach. A single case study focuses on one unit of analysis, such as an individual, group, or organization that is considered of unique value about the research questions (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009) (Quintão et al., 2020). The single case study used in this research emphasizes the importance of an iterative, reflective process in qualitative data analysis, in which the researcher continually revisits the data to deepen understanding and refine the analytical focus. This approach is also highly relevant in policy analysis, as it can answer "why" and "how" questions, offering deep insights into its processes and outcomes (Kodithuwakku, 2022).



The subjects of this study consist of five students from Class XI MPLB 1, Cohort 2025, at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto. Five students from class XI MPLB 1 State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto were selected as participants in this study using purposive sampling, which involves the deliberate selection of participants based on the study's objectives. These students were selected because they showed interest and active involvement in group guidance activities focused on self-development. In addition, these students have diverse backgrounds regarding personal experiences, learning motivations, and challenges faced in school and social life. This diversity provides a rich and in-depth picture of the dynamics of self-improvement among vocational high school students. The selection of class XI was also based on the consideration that students at this level are in an important phase in determining the direction of their future, both in the context of further education and work readiness, so it is very relevant to study in the context of self-development and the meaning of life.

Data collection methods include documenting handwritten group guidance outcomes and conducting in-depth interviews to explore the meaning behind the writings. The data analysis method used was lexical semantic analysis to identify the implied meanings and spiritual values in the students' writings. Documentation was conducted through library studies (i.e., research that utilises notes, books, and other written materials as data sources) (Chigbu et al., 2023), such as journals, books, and notes. More specifically, in this study, the author analysed data from handwritten self-improvement texts written by five students as output from Group Guidance for Grade XI MPLB 1 Class of 2025 at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto. Five female students were purposively selected based on the following criteria: (1) actively participating in group counselling sessions, (2) showing signs of identity crisis (imbalance between cognitive and spiritual development), and (3) willing to engage in reflective writing for self-development. The selection of five participants was considered sufficient to achieve thematic saturation (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Semantics is the study of meaning in the sense of the study of meaning (Yayang & Supadi, 2025). Semantics is a subdiscipline of linguistics that explores meaning. Semantics is a vast field of study, as it contributes to various aspects of the structure and function of language and can therefore be linked to anthropology, philosophy, and psychology (Hipkiss, 2014). The stages of using lexical-semantic analysis in this study began with collecting students' handwritten data and then identifying the keywords and sentence structures used. Furthermore, meanings were grouped by linguistic and emotional contexts to interpret implied messages within Ibn Arabi's cosmology, which reflects students' motivation, spiritual values, and direction of self-development. Using lexical semantics as the theory of analysis, students' writings were analysed in two stages: (1) identification of keywords; tafakur, self-understanding, (2) classification of connotative meanings; you can (affirmation), Stay alright (*tafakur*), Thank you (*qonaah*).

In this study, lexical-semantic data analysis based on Ibn Arabi's cosmology is used to explore the deepest meaning of students' writing by examining words that reflect spiritual journeys and self-development. This approach connects language symbolism with the concept of self-awareness, divine love, and the unity of being in Ibn Arabi's cosmology, so that each word is interpreted linguistically, philosophically, and spiritually. Triangulation in this study was achieved by involving guidance and counseling teachers to strengthen the results of the lexical-semantic analysis based on Ibn Arabi's cosmology. guidance and counseling teachers provide additional perspectives through interviews and observations of student behavior and development, so that the meaning of the writing can



be validated in both contextual and spiritual terms. This approach ensures that the analysis results are linguistically accurate and relevant to the real conditions of students in the school environment.

The limitation of this study lies in the number of participants, consisting of only five students, so the findings cannot be generalized widely. Although it provides an in-depth understanding of individual experiences, its limited number narrows the range of perspectives and makes them less representative of the entire student population. However, this approach remains relevant for the initial exploration and development of a more conceptually in-depth Ibn Arabi cosmology-based group guidance model.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Stages of guidance group based on Ibn Arabi's cosmology are that students write down and formulate three words of gratitude: first, thank yourself, that is, they appreciate their concerns and efforts, as a first step to cleanse the heart for the initial gate to be ready to receive the divine light (*tajalli*). Then, thanks to nature, for example, the sound of rain or sunlight is perceived as a mirror of the names of Allah, such as *ar-Rahm* and *al-Khaliq*.

The stage of semantic analysis in writing begins with the emergence of two keywords: meditation and self-understanding. The word meditation, which refers to deep reflection, often appears hand in hand with terms such as "thank you" and "stay well". The phrase "self-understanding" appears alongside the terms "you can" and "you are strong," indicating that students use contemplation to seek spiritual understanding of God's creation and of everything God brings.

Self-improvement with the presence of Ibnu Arabi cosmology in the sense of meditation by Class XI MPLB 1 State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto was expressed through handwritten writings as the output of Group guidance, which was held on Thursday, January 23, 2025, at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto.

**Table 1.**

Table Motivation of Group Guidance Participants

No Figure	Id Student	Age	Family Background	Motivation to Join Group Guidance	Purpose of Attending Group Guidance
1.0	Student 1	17	Harmonious	Want to arouse herself	To as a way of calming down and accepting the struggle
1.1	Student 2	16	Harmonious	Want to strengthen her heart to be more steadfast	To as a way of developing oneself to be more grateful or thankful
1.2	Student 3	17	Less Harmonious	Want to try to understand more about good social acceptance	To as one of the steps to understanding the essence of life
1.3	Student 4	17	Harmonious	Want to understand more about herself	To prove how she can realise his success.

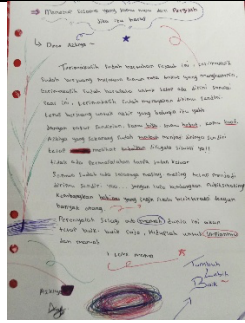


1.4	Student 16 5	Less of Affection	Want to further enhance self-development	As a reinforcement of belief in the power within
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The output of the group's guidance in the form of handwritten writings about Self Improvement is contained in writing about the desire to improve the quality of self, life skills, maintaining health, and improvement that continues to arise in various forms and ways, such as increasing the intensity of trying new things that are positive nuances using library research methods and lexical semantics as the theory of analysis.

**Tabel 2.**

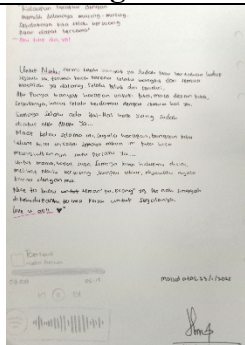
Motivational Quotes for Self-Improvement 1.0

Figure	Self Improvement
 <p><b>Figure 1. Quotes 1.0</b></p>	<p><i>“Terus berjuang untuk akhir yang bahagia itu ya!. Jangan takut sendirian, kamu bisa, kamu hebat, kamu kuat. Percayalah selagi masih ada mamah, dunia ini akan tetap baik baik saja. Hiduplah untuk impianmu dan mamah.”</i></p> <p><i>“Keep fighting for that happy ending!. Do not be afraid to be alone. You can. You are great. You are strong. Trust me, as long as you are here, the world will be okay. Live for your dreams and Mama.”</i></p>

The quote above is aphrases written by one of the Class XI MPLB 1 students. In the writing, he mentioned that he was improving himself (Self-Improvement) with positive affirmations, as seen in the quote *“kamu bisa, kamu hebat, kamu kuat”* (*“you can, you are great, you are strong”*). They are linear with the concept of *muraqabah* in tasawuf: a plan and a step towards improving the quality of the self, acceptance, and gratitude, which are the foundation for always striving.

**Tabel 3.**

Motivational Quotes for Self-Improvement 1.1

Figure	Self Improvement
 <p><b>Figure 2. Quotes 1.1</b></p>	<p><i>“Percayalah selagi masih ada mamah, dunia ini akan tetap baik baik saja.”</i></p> <p><i>“Believe me, as long as there is Mommy, the world will still be fine,”</i></p> <p><i>“Semoga selalu ada hal hal baik yang sudah diatur oleh Allah ya..” ;</i></p> <p><i>“May there always be good things that have been arranged by God..”</i></p>

It goes on to the second quote that reveals how glorious a struggle equated with Hope (*raja*) to the creator. One of *Raja*'s steps, as well as self-improvement efforts, is to

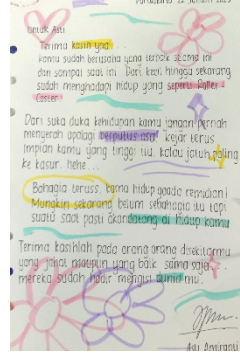


beautify the strength of the heart with the phrase to believe in the good destiny of Allah SWT, which will soon come.

Then, on the third, the Class XI MPLB 1 students revealed the handwriting.

**Tabel 4.**

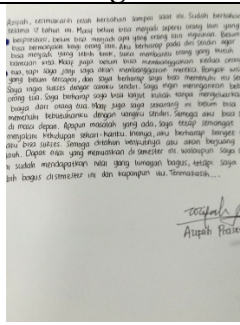
Motivational Quotes for Self-Improvement 1.2

Figure	Self Improvement
 <p><b>Figure 2. Quotes 1.2</b></p>	<p><i>“Terima kasihlah pada orang orang disekitarmu yang jahat maupun yang baik sama saja, mereka sudah hadir mengisi harimu.”</i></p> <p>“Thank the people around you who are bad and good alike, they have been present to fill your day.”</p>

Fourth handwriting about Self Improvement by a student of Class XI MPLB 1.

**Tabel 5.**

Motivational Quotes for Self-Improvement 1.3

Figure	Self Improvement
 <p><b>Figure 3. Quotes 1.3</b></p>	<p><i>“Saya ingin sukses dengan caraku sendiri, saya ingin meringankan beban orang tua, saya berharap saya bisa lanjut kuliah tanpa mengeluarkan biaya dari orang tua.”</i></p> <p>“I want to be successful in my own way, I want to ease the burden of parents, I wish I could go to college without spending money from parents.”</p>

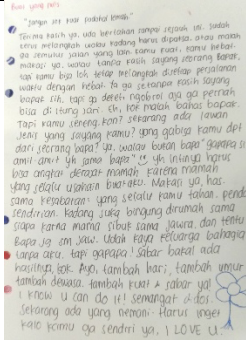
Expressing a sense of hope that is so deep within yourself simultaneously means being more serious about developing your potential and self-qualities (Self-Improvement). Belief in yourself is evident.



Then, the fifth handwriting on Self-Improvement by Class XI MPLB 1 students.

**Tabel 6.**

**Motivational Quotes for Self-Improvement 1.4**

Figure	Self Improvement
 <p><b>Figure 4. Quotes 1.4</b></p>	<p><i>“Ayo!, tambah hari, tambah umur, tambah dewasa, tambah kuat dan sabar ya!, i know you can do it.”</i></p> <p><i>“Come on! more days, more years, more adults, more strength and patience yes!, i know you can do it.”</i></p>

The fifth Writing by Class XI MPLB 1 students talks about how a writer who is overflowing with feelings and positive affirmations is always doing.

Self-improvement for students of Class XI MPLB 1 at State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto integrates a spiritual approach through group counseling activities that draw on Ibn Arabi's cosmology and meditation. Ibn Arabi, a great sufi, viewed the universe as a reflection of divine reality, in which every being has a position and meaning in the order of being. Through meditation, students can reflect on their existence, understand their inner potential, and realize the spiritual connection between man and the creator. This process is facilitated in group counseling through reflective discussions, shared experiences, and deep self-awareness exercises. This approach strengthens students' emotional and social development and fosters greater existential awareness, allowing them to live more meaningfully, responsibly, and values-oriented school lives.

**Discussion**

Group guidance aims to help groups of students become stronger, larger, and more independent (Yu et al., 2022). The findings on positive affirmations (Figure 1.0) align with self-affirmation theory, which integrates with positive psychology (Creswell et al., 2005) on self-value affirmations. They can reduce psychological stress responses (Yandri & Juliawati, 2025). Hope (*raja*) in Allah SWT as proof that man is the servant of Allah SWT (Isa & Utomo, 2024; Rassool, 2024).

“*Hal-hal baik*” (Good things) in the quote is connoted as the author's efforts to always meditate, in the sense of understanding the regularity of the beautiful wonder of the universe (cosmos), including everything that has been presented (Arif M, 2024). In line with the principles of Islamic psychological theory of *tazkiyatun nafs* for meditation, which involves a spiritual journey, there are stages to understand the order of nature and to further understand and accept what has been destined by Allah SWT (Yahya & Akib, 2024).

Self-improvement in writing is through expression to thank Allah SWT for everything that has been brought as an acceptance of the power of Allah SWT in the life of the author, who simultaneously strives always to be *qonaah* while living life (Tahir et al., 2025). The expression in Figure 2 aligns with the concepts of positive psychology (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) regarding social intelligence: gratitude is not just an emotion



but a way of thinking and acting that promotes psychological well-being and strengthens social relationships. Linear, also within Ibn Arabi's cosmology, is about self-servitude, involving a constant effort to think about and understand the essence of life and the various meanings implied in everything Allah SWT has presented to each of his servants (Shahba & Khanbaba, 2024).

Hope is equated with efforts to realize hopes, desires, and dreams, which, of course, have a direction toward good things, and the steps planned will be easier to implement (Hehir, 2024). The findings on self-confidence, expectations, and realization in Figure 3 are discussed in the theory of positive psychology (Dweck, 2017) regarding the nature of ability and achievement, namely, self-efficacy and hope for success.

Positive affirmations, such as mentioning the phrase "I know you can do it," become a positive statement intended for yourself as a step and an effort to self-improvement, by the principles offered by Ibn Arabi's cosmology, which is about the best effort to understand oneself, which continues to understand better the nature of oneself, which is always filled with potential (Rassool, 2021; Rahman, 2025). Linear, also within the theory of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014), about positive thought patterns and how to develop an optimistic mind, builds hope by starting with what starts today and what starts tomorrow, in the sense of doing what can be done now.

The universe, or the cosmos, is often used interchangeably with the term "Universe" (the universe). The cosmos in Islamic terminology is (al'Alam), which more specifically refers to "*ma siwa Allah*," which means "everything other than Allah." (Chittick, 2015). *Ma siwa Allah* is a sign and a journey for humans to understand Allah's essence. Reading, understanding, listening, and believing in the universe as a manifestation of God (Calis, 2022). The term "cosmos" in this study refers to the universe, making it easier to understand while conveying a holistic and universal meaning. Cosmology originates from the Greek words "*kosmos*" and "*logos*", which signify order, structure, and a well-organized arrangement. The antonym for "cosmos" is "chaos" (disorder). The word "*logos*" means "order", but in "cosmology", it can be interpreted as "rational pillars" (Gschwandtner, 2021). When humans embark on a journey to discover their true selves and understand their true nature, they will be more inclined to think about everything presented and brought about by the universe or cosmos (Firdiansyah & Alfiyatin, 2023). The Creator of the universe is Allah SWT, and the existence of the universe and all its contents is a sign and proof of His greatness and power. As stated in the words of Allah SWT in Q.S. Ali' Imran Verse 190, which means: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for those of understanding."

In this study, cosmology focuses on utilising the cosmos (the universe) to reflect on everything it presents, as a step and an effort towards contemplation. Contemplation is by the guidance stated in Q.S. Ali Imran Verse 190. The creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of day and night, and all that has been revealed are signs of the greatness and power of Allah SWT for those who possess reason. Contemplation is an effort to achieve harmony among humanity, the Creator, humanity, and the universe (Ruslan et al., 2022). The beauty of the universe, the revelation of the goodness of destiny, which is truly beautiful, can be felt and obtained by constantly contemplating (Hanifah et al., 2025).

Ibn Arabi, one of the leading figures in Islamic mysticism and Sufism, has offered a philosophical and spiritual perspective on the dynamics and structure of the universe's order. Ibn Arabi developed a cosmological understanding that unites metaphysical



concepts and perspectives with those of physical or empirical reality (Ul-Haq, 2025). Ibn Arabi teaches that the universe and all its contents are manifestations of God the Creator, the One God. All creation and creatures are manifestations of the divine principle that exists in every part of reality. Everything that exists is an expression of the existence of the One God.

The cosmos referred to in Ibn Arabi's theory is the concept of *tajalli*, understood as the manifestation or embodiment of God, namely God's embodiment in the visible, multifaceted empirical world (Taufiqurrahman, 2021). Humans know God and introduce His existence through the existence (presence) of the cosmos (universe). In essence, the creation of the universe is meant to reveal God's existence to humans who think and reason (Ungu et al., 2024). This is because, in this concept of *tajalli*, it becomes the primary foundation of Ibn Arabi's philosophy, namely, *wahdat al wujud*, because *tajalli* is interpreted and understood as creation, namely, the emergence of many and diverse things from the One, and the One, many things emerge (Nayab & Hassan, 2025).

God created and established the cosmos (the universe) so humans could feel, see, touch, and demonstrate His existence (Jachimowicz, 2024). 'Mirror' is one of the many metaphorical expressions used by Ibn Arabi to express the relationship and order of the cosmos (universe) and God. The universe (mirror) is where God sees Himself, and the desire to see Himself is the purpose and reason for creating the cosmos (universe). The cosmos is the locus of manifestation; the vessel of manifestation, the vessel of the manifestation of the attributes and names of God (Putra & Widodo, 2024). This concept of *tajalli* is the foundation of Ibn Arabi's philosophy, as *tajalli* here is understood as creation, namely, the way many things emerge from the One.

This aspect of Ibn Arabi's cosmology concerns *Tajalli*, *Wahdat Al Wujud*, and the universe as a mirror of Divinity. Where Ibn Al 'Arabi thought about the concept of *tajalli*, it is divided into the universe and man in God's *tajalli*. God, as the Almighty, only shows himself in the diversity that bursts many, better known as *wahdat* and *katsrah*. *Wahdat Al Wujud* means that creation is a manifestation of God, and each creation has an essential meaning, and there is a complete and deep respect for the integrity of creation. The universe as a mirror of Divinity means that the universe (Mirror) is where God sees Himself, and the desire to see Himself is both the goal and the reason for the universe's creation.

Self Improvement or more commonly known as self development is a form of effort being made by individuals to step up to the improvement of self quality, life skills, maintaining health, improvement that continues to rise (Sohmer, 2025) with various forms and ways such as increasing the intensity of trying new positive things; reading, understanding various points of view, writing, interacting with empathy and so on (Wee et al., 2022). The family and its environment are important foundations for the development of self, personality, and individual character. The family's role shapes norms, religious values, morality, and morals (Elsayed, 2024). The growth of self-confidence, reduction of low self-esteem, and a strong belief in one's potential become the life principles offered by self-improvement. Self-development will continue to yield other benefits for the self, such as improved control of negative emotions, greater calm than before, and the use of positive affirmations (Baker et al., 2021).

Self-improvement is a form of effort being made by individuals to step up to improve the quality of self, life skills, maintain health, improvement that continues to arise in various forms and ways such as increasing the intensity of trying new positive



things; reading, understanding various points of view, writing, interacting with attention to empathy and so forth (Kosholap et al., 2021).

Self-improvement is an ongoing process involving changes in psychological maturity, increased personal capacity, and the integration of life values. Four main aspects form the foundation of the self-improvement process: positive affirmations, Skill Development, emotional balance, and existential awareness (Harold, 1968). Positive affirmations are constructive internal statements that strengthen self-image and foster personal confidence. In cognitive psychology, positive affirmations are a form of self-talk that affects perception, motivation, and emotional regulation (Creswell et al., 2005).

Skill development is oriented toward real action to build personal competence and capacity. Individuals committed to self-improvement actively develop new abilities relevant to their professional and personal lives. This reflects the principle of lifelong learning. Emotional balance reflects an individual's ability to understand, manage, and express emotions adaptively. It becomes important in maintaining psychological stability and social effectiveness. Emotionally balanced individuals show high resilience in the face of life's pressures (Gross, 2002). Existential awareness is concerned with philosophical and spiritual reflection on the self's existence. In this aspect, the individual reflects on the meaning and purpose of life and their connectedness to a broader reality.

Then, Positive Psychology places self-improvement among the individual's efforts to achieve flourishing, an optimal state of psychological growth and functioning (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Concepts such as growth mindset (Dweck, 2017), resilience (Masten, 2001), and character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) affirm the human capacity to develop positively. Positive psychology encourages self-improvement through intrinsic motivation, a sense of meaning in life, and active engagement in meaningful activities.

In Islamic psychology, self-improvement is closely related to tazkiyatun nafs (soul purification), a spiritual and ethical process towards self-perfection. Individuals are expected to control the lust of ammarah and towards the lust of muthma'innah through worship, reflection, and strengthening of divine values (Syafii & Azhari, 2025). Ibn Arabi viewed self-improvement as the process of drawing closer to God (*al-Haqq*) by recognizing that human existence derives from divine reality. Thus, self-improvement in Islam encompasses affective, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions, leading the individual toward inner harmony and existential meaning. Ibn Arabi cosmology as Self Improvement is where cosmology by Ibn Arabi in the sense of presenting at the same time thinking about everything that has been presented and brought by the cosmos (universe) as a step and an effort always to meditate (Sariyar, 2024) then it continues for the individual to step towards improving the quality of self, life skills, health maintenance, self improvement that connotes to rise in various ways and efforts such as increasing the intensity of trying new positive things; reading, understanding various points of view, writing, interacting with attention to empathy.

## CONCLUSION

Based on a semantic analysis of student writings, this study demonstrates that group guidance that incorporates Ibn Arabi's cosmology, specifically the concept of *tafakkur* (contemplation) through structured meditation, is an effective and practical approach to fostering holistic self-improvement among vocational high school students. Conducted with five students from State Vocational High School 1 Purwokerto, the intervention resulted in written outputs expressing a desire to enhance self-worth, life skills, health,



and continuous personal growth through positive actions. The findings, though limited by the small, culturally specific sample and thus not broadly generalizable, highlight significant practical implications: counseling teachers can utilize structured meditation modules, and schools should provide dedicated contemplative spaces. For future research, qualitative phenomenological or case study designs are recommended to explore diverse student experiences with this Sufi-based counseling approach across varied cultural and educational contexts, while quantitative experimental methods could be used to develop standardized models and instruments. This integration of Ibn Arabi's cosmology represents a novel contribution to spirituality-based counseling in Indonesian education, offering a culturally and spiritually relevant framework to deepen self-understanding, strengthen spiritual awareness, and build character in students facing future challenges.

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