



# WEALTH AND VALUES: EXPLORING MONEY BELIEFS IN THE ARLONG PARK ARC OF ONE PIECE

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## ABSTRACT

*This article aims to explore the portrayal of money beliefs in One Piece anime. One Piece is a globally influential anime among teenagers and young adults. This study seeks to provide valuable insights into the intersections of popular culture and personal finance, using the Arlong Park arc as a convincing and rich source of analysis that combine wealth, values, and emotional resonance. This is qualitative descriptive research. Data were collected by watching and taking notes at anime One Piece –Arlong Park Arc. Structural analysis of the narrative method was used to analyze the data. The results found that among four concepts of money beliefs, the anime was dominated by money worship and money status. This research also found positive behavior from characters who keep the value over the money. The portrayal of Nami’s emotional entanglement shows her dedication to her village, which has been destroyed by Arlong Pirates. The restoration of the village is her driving force to be a wealthy person.*

**Keywords:** Money Belief; Anime; One Piece; Value

## 1. Introduction

The current technological growth has improved the way young people do financial transactions. There are several products of financial technology that help people earn, spend, and invest. Therefore, financial behavior gradually shifts from traditional to digital platform.

Rapid technological change also brings about economic disruption. The situation brings about changes in the way companies manage their business. The complexity of employment is increasing. The office job, traditionally mostly supported by a full-time onsite employer, gradually changes into remote work with more freelancers. There are also many online investing opportunities that bring different kinds of risk into the business.

The development of social media brings fast information to young people about current trends that come from their circle of friends or celebrities. This leads to fear of missing out (FOMO) phenomena and a consumptive lifestyle. As a result, in addition to the already high basic living cost, young people also got trapped in unnecessary spending.

The combination of technological development, economic disruption, and societal change as mentioned above increases the possibility of financial difficulties for young people. The new digital era changes the financial decision making and financial behavior of young people.

In addition to the digital environment, financial behavior is also shaped by emotional influence and belief. Fear, greed, and anxiety have a significant impact on people's approach to money management.

Popular culture such as movies, anime, and manga can promote changes in young people belief and attitude. Pop culture can help in the education (Ceylan-Dadakoğlu et al., 2022; Fauzy, 2021; Miranda & Educators, 2023; Rizziq et al., 2022; Sonmali et al., 2021; Yusof et

al., 2023).

Pop culture is reflecting social values (Abu Backer, 2023; Adhitama, 2022; Butler et al., 2016; de Leeuw & van der Laan, 2018; Lu & Zhang, 2019). It is the formation of individual preferences and attitudes (Iwasaki, 2021; Kubrak, 2020; Liu et al., 2022; Yusof et al., 2021). Furthermore, pop culture also represents the identity of young people (Adhitama, 2022). In short, pop culture shapes the beliefs, behaviors, and identity of young people. Anime as one of the pop culture also shape perspective and norms. It is a medium to provoke empathy, stimulate thought, and inspire change (Ginting et al., 2023; Praveen & Srinivasan, 2022; Rizziq et al., 2022). Iconic characters and convincing stories have the ability to have a lasting impact on the views of an individual about the world.

One of the popular and influencing anime is One Piece. It is adapted from manga and currently has live-action movie version. One Piece targeted the global audience of teens and young adults. It is the story of a group of young people who chase their dreams. The themes of this anime are adventure, friendship, fantasy, dream, and ambition. While pursuing oneself dream, they maintain respect for individual principle. The story also present each character background and personal growth which is full of complex moral dilemma. This proposes young people to reflect their aspirations and value. As the main story of Pirates, the financial topic cannot be separated from the story line. The financial matters represented by treasure and bounty.

This research aims to identify the concept of money belief in the Arlong Park Arlong Anime One Piece. One Piece can influence young people with their belief in money while offering both entertainment and subtle lessons.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Money Belief*

Money-related attitudes and beliefs are formed quite early in childhood and are carried into adulthood. The fact that this is the case and that attitudes about work ethics are strongly correlated with wealth offers an intriguing and significant window into the early socialization techniques of parents, who undoubtedly instill a work ethic in their kids. (Kirkcaldy & Furnham, 1993). Beliefs about money serve as a significant predictor of success or failure in managing finances to achieve financial freedom (Sina, 2013). Mismanagement of money can cause various unforeseen problems and this is due to beliefs about money, whether the person is aware or not aware of their beliefs in money, but what is certain is that money beliefs are something that should be understood (B. T. Klontz, Britt, Mentzer, & Klontz, 2011).

#### *2.1.1 Money Script*

Money scripts are underlying assumptions or beliefs about money that are typically only partially true, are often developed in childhood, and are unconsciously followed throughout adulthood. Money scripts are often passed down from generation to generation within families and cultures and shape financial behaviors (Klontz, et al., 2015). Gender-neutral, money scripts can indicate money disorders and are linked to income, net worth, and other financial indicators (B. T. Klontz et al., 2011). The money script consists of money avoidance, money worship, money status, and money vigilance.

#### *2.1.2 Money Avoidance*

Individuals who have money avoidance scripts refuse to take personal accountability for their financial well-being and routinely avoid dealing with money (Klontz & Klontz 2009 in Klontz et al., 2015). Those who avoid money feel bad about money, call the rich people greedy, think money corrupts, and would prefer not to have much of it (Klontz et al., 2012). While some people who avoid money may overspend or give up a large portion of their money in

order to have as little as possible, others who avoid money may severely underspend, even on necessities. People who develop, or inherit, money avoidance scripts succumb to fear, disgust, or anxiety when it comes to money (Klontz et al., 2015) and run away from money problem (Klontz & Klontz, 2009).

### 2.1.3 Money Worship

Some people accept the idea that their happiness will increase with their wealth (B. T. Klontz et al., 2015). Those who worship money believe that in order to succeed, they must put in a great deal of effort and long hours. Those who worship money also think that in order to show others affection, they must spend money (Klontz et al., 2015). Those who worship money are certain that having more money will make them happy and solve all of their problems. They also hold the view that one can never have too much money and that they will never truly be able to afford their life's desires (Klontz & Britt, 2012).

### 2.1.4 Money Status

Adherents of money status scripts are unduly preoccupied with the idea that their net worth and self-esteem are equivalent. They associate money with their socioeconomic class and feel that it grants them status (Klontz et al., 2012). Individuals who have money status scripts may pose as having more money than they actually do, which puts them at danger of overspending in an attempt to appear prosperous. They think that people are only as successful as their income and that if they lead a good life, the cosmos would provide for their material requirements (Klontz & Britt, 2012).

### 2.1.5 Money Vigilance

The financially vigilant are aware, cautious, and worried about their future. They think it's critical that individuals work for their money, save, and not receive financial handouts. They are less inclined to use credit and won't purchase anything if they can't pay with cash (Klontz & Britt, 2012). Although they are less likely to deceive their spouse about their spending habits, those who are money cautious also tend to be concerned and secretive about their financial situation with others.

## 2.2 *Popular Culture*

Popular culture is a culture that affects how people think, feel, look at things, and even recent occurrences in the culture at the moment (Yusof et al., 2023). Popular culture becomes a trend in people's lives, and tends to be followed or favored by most people in general. Popular culture always changes and emerges uniquely in various places and times, forming currents and eddies, as well as values that influence society. Popular culture is a global phenomenon that promotes people's shared humanity and transcends geographical borders. Japanese popular culture is one of the most influential in the world, combining ancient traditions with contemporary innovation. Forms of cultural expression that stand out from Japan and have gained global appeal are manga and anime.

### 2.2.1 Manga

Manga typically depicts Japanese life and culture. Comics drawn in the Japanese style popularized in the mid-1900s are referred to as modern manga (Yuana & Chaqiqi, 2021). Manga spans a wide range of genres, from historical literature to science fiction set in the future, and from adolescent romance to profound concepts pertaining to life.

### 2.2.2 Anime

Anime is the term for works of Japanese animation. Anime is a type of Japanese animation that draws inspiration from Japanese comics, sometimes known as "manga," (Ranang, et al., 2010) which are widely recognized cartoons worldwide (Yusof et al., 2023). An unique purpose for adapting manga into anime is to popularize the culture globally, particularly among younger audiences like teens and adults (Adhitama, 2022). One of the most in-demand forms of entertainment and culture in Japan is anime, which is rapidly becoming popular throughout the globe (Jelantik & Khusyairi, 2022). Since anime was initially created for Japanese audiences to enjoy, it is not intended to propagate Japanese popular culture. Nonetheless, anime has become more and more popular over the globe, and even those who don't watch it usually accept and find it enjoyable (Yusof et al., 2023).

## 3. Research Methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a narrative structural analysis approach developed by Roland Barthes (1977). This research aims to identify the concepts of money belief in the anime Arlong Park ARC of One Piece. The data sources for this research are words, sentences and expressions expressed by characters in the anime Arlong Park ARC of One Piece.

### 3.1 Narrative Structural Analysis

A variety of narrative formats, including those seen in fairy tales, books, and movies, can be examined using Roland Barthes' structural narrative analysis. Researchers can gain a more methodical and objective understanding of a narrative's structure and meaning with the use of this study. Narrative structural analysis is divided into three levels, function analysis, action analysis, and narrative analysis (Barthes, 1977).

#### 3.1.1 Function Analysis

The lowest level of narrative structure is function. Functional analysis explain function and sequence. Barthes mentioned the nature of function in structural narrative analysis.

“The essence of a function is, so to speak, the seed that it sows in the narrative, planting an element that will come to fruition later - either on the same level or elsewhere, on another level” (Barthes, 1977 p.88).

#### 3.1.2 Action Analysis

The action analysis sees and explains the actant's actions (Dewa, 2021). The analysis looking at the relationships between characters in relation to narrative development.

#### 3.1.3 Narrative Analysis

The narrative analysis describe how is the power of stories in telling themselves? What meaning do you get from the story? Description of meaning with meaning by integrating the analysis stages previously placed in the context of narrative communication (Barthes, 1977).

### 3.2 Identifying Money Belief

From structural narrative analysis, researchers will identify the concepts of money belief that appear in the conversation of the anime Arlong Park ARC of One Piece.

## 4. Research Findings and Discussion

Monkey D. Luffy is the main character of One Piece anime. However, in the Arc of Arlong Park, the focus of the story is Nami. She is the navigator of *Mugiwara* (Straw Hat)

Pirates. Nami acts as the protagonist, while Arlong is an antagonist in the story. Besides those two main characters, this story has several other supporting characters and sequences.

#### 4.1 Characters

In summary, the characters in this anime can be categorized into the protagonist side and antagonist side. The protagonist side are the characters that support Nami. This side consists of *Mugiwara* Pirates, 2 Bounty Hunters, and Cocoyashi Villagers.

There are several members of *Mugiwara* Pirates. In this story, the members of *Mugiwara* Pirates that are joining the story are Monkey D. Luffy, Zoro, Sanji, and Ussop. Villagers with names and significant roles are Belmere, Nojiko, and Gen-San. The bounty hunters are Yosaku and Johnny.

The antagonist side is the character that supports Arlong. The member of Arlong cronies are Fishman Pirates and corrupted members of The Marines led by Captain Nezumi. The mentionable and the strongest Fishman Pirate members beside Arlong are Hatchan, Chew, and Kuroobi.

#### 4.2 Story

The story in this Arc consists of 4 sequences. The sequences of the story are opening, flashback, conflict, and ending.

The first stage is the beginning of the story. It is the story of the quest for Nami. The story starts with the journey of *Mugiwara*'s crew to find the whereabouts of Nami and *Mugiwara* Pirate's ship, *Going Merry*, which are unknown. It turns out that Nami brings the ship to Arlong Park, the base of the fishman pirate led by Arlong, a very strong fishman. In this sequence, Nami is told to be part of Arlong's pirates. Arlong fancies her ability to draw maps. In this sequence Nami appears as a betrayer of *Mugiwara* pirates and a spy of Fishmen pirates.

The second stage is a flashback of the tragedy that happened to Nami. It contains the background story of Nami that shows her true motives. She does not betray the *Mugiwara* Pirates. She hates Arlong that destroyed Cocoyashi Village where she grew up. Arlong also exploits the villagers and kills everyone who cannot pay tribute to Arlong. Among the victims was Nami's mother Belmere. Nami wants to get revenge on her mother, as well as free her village from Fishmen Pirate. Nami wants to pay the ransom to get Arlong to release her village. However, the Marines led by Nezumi confiscated the money. Later, the *Mugiwara* Pirate crew arrives to help Nami.

The third stage is a conflict between the *Mugiwara* Pirate and the Fishermen Pirate. This stage shows the fight that happens between *Mugiwara* Pirate led by Luffy and Fishmen Pirate led by Arlong. The final battle is between Luffy and Arlong. Luffy defeats Arlong and destroys his base.

The fourth stage is the end of the story. The villagers celebrate their freedom. However, it is almost spoiled by Nezumi, who tries to claim Arlong money. But Nami and her friends beat him and stop him. The story ends with the sailing of *Going Merry* to the sea accompanied by the cheers from the villagers.

#### 4.3 Money Belief

This study found the status of the money in the dialogue of Arlong, Nami, Nojiko, and some random villagers.

Arlong as a strong fishman feels superior over the ordinary human being. Therefore, he regards the villagers as lowly human beings.

*“Understand? Low-life humans should just think of nothing but ways of offering the money to me”*

*“Listen. You lowly humans simply need to keep paying up without thinking! I need enormous funds! Your tribute money will eventually become the cornerstone of the Arlong empire, which will rule the East Blue!”*

According to Arlong, those lowly humans don't deserve to live. Thus, to elevate your status and get your right to live, you have to pay.

*“Under my rule, anyone without money dies! Understand, you inferior species?”*

*“100,000 berries per adult. 50,000 berries per kid. Those who can't pay...die!”*

*“The blunder of being unable to pay tribute money is an act of rebellion against us!”*

Nami also regards money as a tool to get status. This is shown by her conduct to the Fisherman Pirate.

*“Do you still not get it? The one and only reason I got close to you was for the money! Now that you're flat broke, you have no charm whatsoever!”*

Due to the circumstances that happen in the village, Nojiko also view money as a means to get status. The status of having a right to live. Therefore, money is to buy your life.

*“Exactly like it sounds, it's money that we offer to them! We buy our lives every month with money.”*

Nojiko's opinion is supported by the villagers.

*“Sounds like we'll have to pay for our lives every month at 100,000 berries from now on!”*

*“Endure it now! we should just be glad no one in the village has died. if money is all that's needed, it's an easy price to pay!”*

Money worship in this anime is shown by Arlong and Nami. Arlong views that money is the best in the world.

*“A good world is one in which money flows well! Money is good, you can trust it more than anything!”*

*“Money the best, nothing's more dependable than money”*

He also mentions Nami's tendency to worship money.

*“You were blindly deceived, weren't you? She (Nami) can even forget her mother's death for the sake of money”*

Nami herself shows agreement with Arlong's view of her worshipping money.

*“That's fine. I'm a pirate! But Arlong is a reasonable guy. Money will fix all this, so it's just a little more until our agreement!”*

Nami does not trust anyone, but she trusts money.

*"The only thing I trust is money"*

She thinks that money can solve any problem.

*"Anything can be solved with money"*

Money avoidance is only shown by Nezumi, the captain of The Marine. However, it is not fully money avoidance since he just mentions it after he fails to get the money from Nami. His conduct is more about running from the responsibility that comes with the money.

*"I'll give it back, honestly. I don't care anymore."*

#### 4.4 Value and Wealth

Despite the negative part of money belief shown, there are some positive things when the characters chose value over wealth.

Nami has a strong sense of value. She values her family and her village over the wealth she can gain for herself. She also appreciates the promise over money.

*"Bellmere-san would be happier if we were gone. ... Having 2 children cost lots of money..."*

*"I keep my promises made over money even if it means my death."*

The argument of Nojiko also strengthens Nami's regards over value.

*"She says it's okay, because she'll just steal some more. Once that girl says something, there's no changing her mind"*

Unfortunately, not everyone understands the point of view of Nami. Ussop misunderstands Nami's motive before he knows the background story of Nami.

*"Darn it! So that's the deal? So she had us fooled the entire time! She was after treasure from the very start!"*

Ussop's opinion is in line with Arlong's.

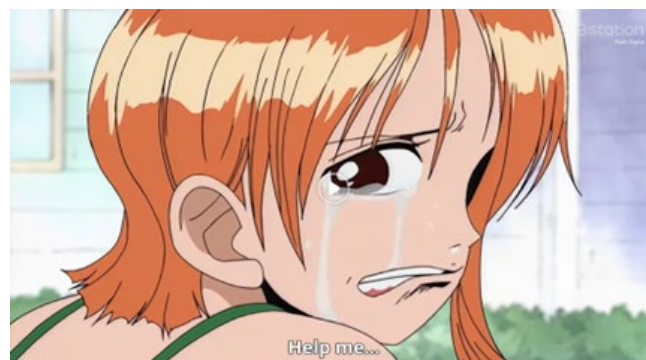
*"So you had them completely fooled! This girls like cold blooded witch..she'll even forget about her own parent's death for money!"*

Nami's symbolic act of stabbing her tattoo of Arlong's symbol reflects her inner turmoil and the price she's willing to pay for her village's freedom, showcasing her values over personal gain.



Nami tearfully reveals her true intentions to Luffy, admitting that she had to pretend to side with Arlong to protect her village. Nami talking to Luffy:

*“Go away! You! Go away! Go away!! Go away!! Go away!! Go away!! Go away! Go away!! Go away!!.....Luffy Help me.”*





Luffy said: “OF COURSE I WILL!!!”



On the other hand, Arlong tried to show that he has value. He wants people to see that he regards promise over money.

*“It can't be helped! That's what we agreed 8 years ago. I'm a man who'd die to keep my money-related promises.”*

However, Arlong’s words are just to deceive Nami. He says that he will keep his promise, but he tells Nezumi to take the money.

This anime also shows that life is very important. It is the most important thing to keep, because we can do anything only when we are alive. Therefore, it is okay to use money to survive.

*“Bellmere!! Don't waste your life for some pathetic sense of justice! Some battles aren't worth fighting! Some issues can be solved with money!”*

## 5. Conclusions

Taken together, these findings demonstrate that among the four concepts of money beliefs, the anime was dominated by money worship and money status. This study also found positive behavior from characters who keep their idealistic approach to wealth. It was shown by the emotional entanglement of Nami during her journey to save her village. The village has become Nami's main force to gain wealth and become a rich person. This showed her dedication to her village. These findings add substantially to our understanding of the value of money beliefs and financial decision-making of an individual. One Piece anime has rich meaning and lesson behind the story especially about financial decision. More research should further explore financial factors from other perspectives, such as the exploitations and governance of organizations.

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