Kristen Powers
Peer Influence Theory

       Adolescents are immersed in a world where peer influence is powerful and determined. More precisely, peer groups become a prominent source of leadership, or guidance, in the life of a teenager. This positions these young adults to be particularly susceptible to peer pressure. An individual is more likely to engage in delinquent activities if their subculture endorses it (Medrut, 2014). Though it is probable that these acts are deleterious to ones health, conforming to the requests on ones peers is held to a higher standard. Adolescents are more prone to succumb to peer pressure due to the critical need for belongingness. The feeling of being accepted and supported emotionally by others is an integral part of a teenager's life (Van Ryzin, Gravely, & Roseth, 2009). To uphold this support, an individual will likely yield to the compelling requests of the opposition. The Peer Influence Theory can be further understood through concepts detailed within the Elaboration Likelihood Model, Social Exchange Theory, and Face Negotiation Theory.

Elaboration Likelihood Model

Elaboration Likelihood Model is a theory dealing with persuasion. According to Richard Petty, there are two primary routes to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. The central route is a cognitive process that involves message elaboration. This type of elaboration requires analysis of the message content that is presented through persuasive communicative interactions. Contrarily, the peripheral route is a mental shortcut. Instead of scrutinizing the message, it is simply accepted or rejected based on extraneous cues. There are six cues that trigger the peripheral route for a listener, consisting of reciprocation, consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. One assumption of the Elaboration Likelihood Model is that people are driven to hold legitimate attitudes. However, a restricted number of ideas can only be analyzed at

one time by individuals, so, many slip through the cracks without being processed. Messages that are considered to be less important are subject to this action.