

ELM: Elaboration Likelihood Model

Petty and Cacioppo

Cacioppo, J.T. & Petty, R.E. (1979). Effects of message repetition and position on cognitive response, recall and persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 27, 97-109.

Petty, R.E. & Cacioppo, J.T. (1986). *The Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion*. New York: Academic Press.

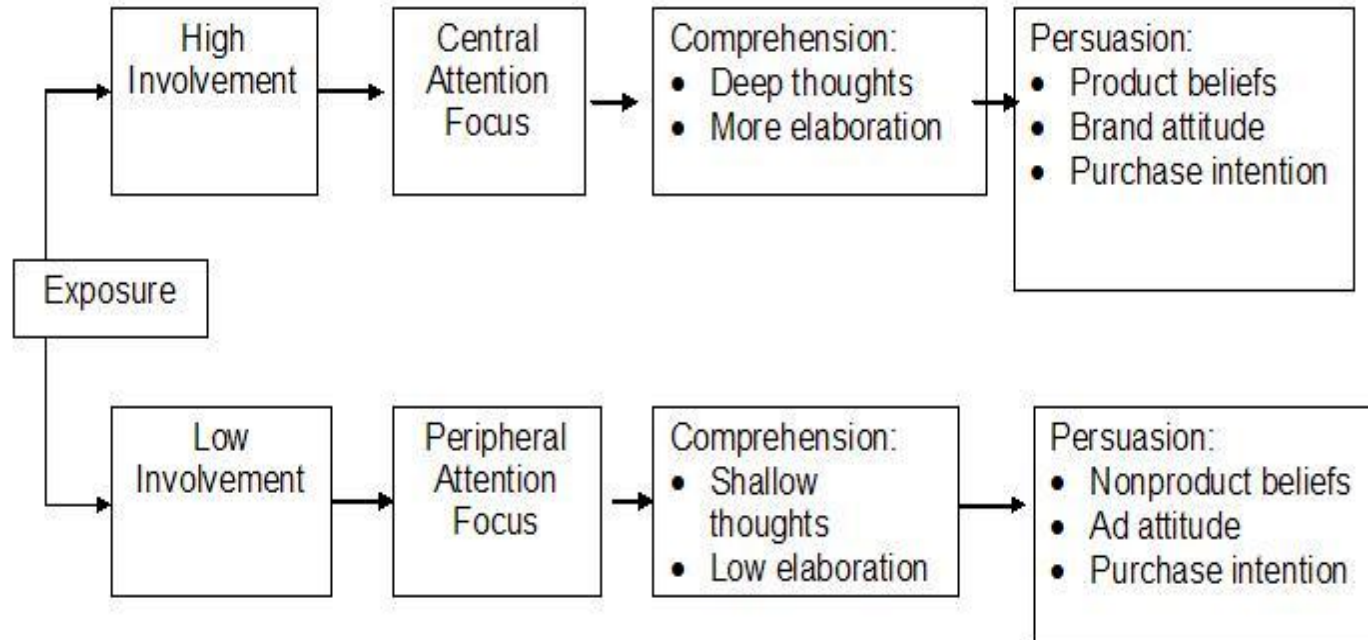
Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

- Two basic routes to persuasion
- **Central route:** is reflective, requires mental effort, relies on cognitive elaboration, thinking about, reflecting on a message
 - **Motivation** (willingness) to process a message
 - **Ability** to process (understand) a message

ELM, continued

- **The Peripheral route:** is reflexive, based on mental shortcuts, credibility, appearance cues, quantity of arguments
 - **heuristic cues (decision rules):** rules for simplifying the thought process
 - “As seen on TV”
 - Source attractiveness (celebrity endorsements) “Brad Pitt is in the movie, so it has to be good.”
 - Perceived similarity: “I’ll vote with him, he’s a Christian too.”

Petty & Cacioppo's ELM



Involvement and the ELM

- The role of **involvement** in the topic or issue:
 - high involvement increases the likelihood of central processing, e.g. message scrutiny
 - low involvement increases the likelihood of peripheral processing.
 - high involvement decreases reliance on credibility (peripheral cue)

Criticisms of the ELM

- no accommodation for parallel (simultaneous) processing.
- Stiff and others (Stiff, 1994; Stiff & Boster, 1987) have charged that the ELM is not falsifiable.
 - They claim the ELM can't specify *a priori* whether a particular cue will be processed centrally or peripherally.
- A limited range of topics or issues has been studied
- Studies conducted by Petty & Cacioppo show stronger, more robust findings than studies conducted by others using the ELM (Stiff, 1994)