



# Chutzpadik advertising and its effectiveness: Four studies of agencies and audiences

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## ABSTRACT

The creation of advertisements that attract immediate attention and simultaneously provoke thoughts and stimulate ongoing discussions is challenging. Hence, advertisers increasingly use Chutzpadik advertising, which we define as “radical advertising messaging that purposefully transgresses social norms and proscribed topics”. We conduct four studies to identify the dimensions and evaluate the effectiveness of Chutzpadik advertising. The first two studies involve interviews with 12 managers of advertising agencies and 22 members of the Israeli general public (audience members). The interviews reveal Chutzpadik advertising’s dimensions are norm violation, novelty, and audacity. In two subsequent studies, the effectiveness of Chutzpadik advertising is examined through data collected from 108 managers and 209 audience members. Structural equation modeling and fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis suggest the three dimensions of Chutzpadik advertising differentially affect advertising effectiveness. Our research provides theoretical and empirical grounding for Chutzpadik advertising and advances our knowledge of its effectiveness within differentiation advertising research.

## 1. Introduction

“Chutzpah” is a Yiddish word (though often seen in English-language contexts) that denotes pushing social boundaries to generate a response. It has long been part of the advertising industry vernacular and is seen as a means of creating differentiation. Differentiation through advertising has proven to be a cost-effective way of standing out (Jiang & Srinivasan, 2016) and is increasingly achieved through the use of controversy (Carrillat et al., 2019; Erdogan, 2008) to grab audience attention (Madan et al., 2017; Theodorakis & Painesis, 2018) and to “cut through the clutter” (Treise et al., 1994; Waller et al., 2005). For controversial advertising to be effective, it has to capture the audience’s attention instantaneously (Dahlén & Edenius, 2007), yet many organizations also want their advertising campaigns to create longer-term impacts. Chutzpadik advertising has the potential to capture audiences’ immediate attention but also affect their longer-term behaviors. It achieves this through provocative material that engenders discussion (see Schultz, 2007). In this context, Chutzpah has promise but its role within

differentiation advertising remains unclear. In particular, we know little about what constitutes Chutzpah within advertising contexts, how it should be utilized, and how effective it is. Here, we report on four studies that (a) conceptualize Chutzpadik advertising, (b) identify its dimensions, and (c) examine the impact of these dimensions on advertising effectiveness.

We define Chutzpadik advertising as “radical advertising messaging that purposefully transgresses social norms and proscribed topics”. This definition arises from our work investigating Chutzpah within advertising contexts, where we find Chutzpadik advertising marries controversy with novelty, not only to grab audiences’ short-term attention but also to stimulate their longer-term interest, engagement, and discussion.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that advertisers have applied Chutzpah for decades (Myers et al., 2017; Wheaton et al., 2007). For example, during the 2010 UK general election campaign, the Conservative Party engaged in Chutzpadik showmanship by displaying the face of Gordon Brown, the leader of the ruling Labour Party, on posters with numerous captions, including: “I increased the gap between rich and poor vote for

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me” [sic]. White (2010) described this poster as “a jaw-dropping example of chutzpah that would probably be disbarred by the advertising standards authority”, given the increase in the wealth gap between 1979 and 1997, when the Conservatives had been in power.

While use of Chutzpah is evident in advertising practice, academics have hitherto overlooked it within differentiation advertising research. At the same time, advertising effectiveness is overwhelmingly concerned with instant differentiation (i.e. cutting through the clutter) (Treise et al. 1994), rather than longer-term effects. Moreover, studies of controversial advertising, which sits under differentiation advertising, have produced conflicting results (Myers et al., 2020); for example, different groups of customers may respond positively or negatively to provocation, even if immediate effectiveness is high (see e.g. Waller et al., 2005). This suggests a complex structure of relationships that requires disentanglement. Against this backdrop, conceptualizing Chutzpadik advertising may help account for past inconsistencies, thereby providing a richer understanding of differentiation advertising contexts. Our paper is therefore concerned with (a) conceptualizing Chutzpadik advertising, (b) identifying its dimensions, and (c) examining the impact of these dimensions on advertising effectiveness, within differentiation advertising settings.

We use a qualitative approach in Studies 1 and 2 to derive Chutzpadik advertising’s definition and framework, and follow the analytical approach outlined by Gioia and colleagues (see e.g. Corley & Gioia, 2011; Gioia et al., 2013). Subsequently, we employ a survey-based methodology in Studies 3 and 4 to test the effectiveness of Chutzpadik advertising. Data are analyzed through both structural equation modeling and fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis. The pairs of studies are conducted with two sets of respondents: advertising managers (producers/encoders), to gauge their Chutzpadik advertising practice; and audience members (receivers/decoders), to gauge their perceptions of and responses to Chutzpadik advertising.

We first find that Chutzpadik advertising entails a combination of norm violation, novelty, and audacity. These three dimensions are linked to advertising effectiveness in different ways. For instance, norm violation is positively related to effectiveness for audiences but not for managers, while there is a negative curvilinear relationship between audacity and advertising effectiveness for both managers and audiences; novelty is positively and linearly related for both groups. It is also an important criterion for high advertising effectiveness.

In turn, we contribute to theory in a number of ways. Firstly, we conceptually delineate Chutzpadik advertising and thereby disentangle it (e.g. Kaartemo & Nyström, 2021; Kohtamäki et al., 2019) from related constructs (e.g. controversial and taboo advertising). In so doing, we develop a conceptual and multi-dimensional understanding of the construct which allows not only for the development of operational measurement and model testing, but also for a fine-grained and layered understanding of Chutzpah’s complex effects on advertising effectiveness. In turn, we pave the way for further research into Chutzpadik advertising itself as well as demonstrate the need for differentiation advertising research to account for Chutzpah in future conceptualizations (e.g. as a control or a moderator). We also provide advertising managers with theoretically and empirically driven knowledge to aid their Chutzpadik advertisement executions.

The following section reviews the literature. Section 3 presents the methodology and results of two qualitative interview-based studies with (a) advertising managers and (b) the Israeli general public (audience members). Section 4 then outlines our conceptual framework and presents four hypotheses, which are tested in two further studies detailed in Sections 5 and 6. The discussion in Section 7 considers the implications of the findings, while the studies’ limitations, and possible directions for future research, are set out in Section 8. Finally, Section 9 offers our concluding remarks.

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Chutzpah

The Yiddish word “Chutzpah” (less commonly *chutzpa*, *hutzpah* or *hutzpa*) is often considered to be *directly* untranslatable into English, despite its widespread use in English-speaking countries. Indeed, Guggenheim (1998) notes that even the US legal system has failed to capture Chutzpah’s meaning in full, concluding “[p]art of the uniqueness of Yiddish words like ‘chutzpah’ is that their meaning varies [...] In the right circumstances and to the right degree, ‘chutzpah’ may intimate spunk. In the wrong situation or to an improper degree, ‘chutzpah’ implies insolence” (p. 418).

According to Dershowitz (1991), it is easier to demonstrate Chutzpah than define it. Chutzpah is generally associated with pushing boundaries, acting “outside the box”, and not following social norms, thus enabling solutions to be expanded and objectives achieved (Howard, 2017; Schultz, 2007). It can be applied to people (Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, 2021) or actions (e.g. advertising campaigns).

Popular literature extols the benefits of Chutzpah over “convention”. For example, Chutzpah is hailed as making things happen, creating new ways of thinking (Schultz, 2007), and optimizing viability (Hill, 2004). Unlike controversy, Chutzpah always has a definitive purpose and a longer-term objective. That said, people may perceive the same Chutzpadik event differently (Dershowitz, 1991), with some thinking it has too little Chutzpah and others too much. Generally, when an appropriate level of Chutzpah is perceived, it is highly valued (Baldoni, 2009; Tyrmand, 2014).

### 2.2. Differentiation advertising

Chutzpadik (less commonly *chutzpahitic* or *chutzpadic*) advertising sits within the field of differentiation advertising, which includes controversial (Carrillat et al., 2019), taboo (Sabri, 2012, 2017; Theodorakis & Painesis, 2018), and creative (Lehnert et al., 2014) advertising. A review reveals significant differences both in how these constructs are conceptually defined and in how they are operationalized (see Appendix A).

Controversial advertising relies on distinctiveness and norm violation (Theodorakis et al., 2015). On one hand, this evokes irritation, offense or disgust (Huhmann & Mott-Stenerson, 2008) but on the other hand, it attracts attention (Waller et al., 2005). The controversy can relate to the product or the execution of the advertisement, or both (Kadić-Maglaljić et al., 2017). The level of controversy is linked to its incongruity with customers’ expectations (Huhmann & Mott-Stenerson, 2008), a characteristic also associated with Chutzpah (Schultz, 2007). Meanwhile, taboo advertising refers to content that is generally unmentionable in public (Myers et al., 2020; Theodorakis et al., 2015). Taboo advertising is conceptually distinct from controversial advertising (e.g. Huhmann & Mott-Stenerson, 2008; Myers et al., 2020). For instance, stimuli may have specific properties (Madan et al., 2017), which may or may not be linked to controversy. Stimuli can also be positively valenced (Roest et al., 2018) whereas controversial stimuli are generally negatively valenced. Finally, creative advertising is concerned with meaningful and appropriate novelty within advertising contexts (Lehnert et al., 2014). Novelty may actually be a necessary condition for both controversial and taboo advertising to enhance all intended advertising outcomes within controversial contexts (though this is not so explicit in the literature to date).

### 2.3. Chutzpadik advertising

Academics have so far overlooked the role Chutzpadik advertising can play in differentiation advertising contexts in general, and controversial advertising contexts in particular. This is surprising given the strong associations between Chutzpah and controversial advertising in

practice. For example, Chutzpah is considered fundamental to the success of Saatchi & Saatchi's advertising campaigns. In their book, *Chutzpah & Chutzpah*, Myers et al. (2017, p. 5) explain that in Saatchi & Saatchi, Chutzpah is associated with "irreverence, brilliance, talent, tantrums, laughs, pratfalls, naughtiness, fearlessness, humanity, outrageousness, eccentricity, daring, excess, wows and oops". This highlights Chutzpah's interconnectedness with controversy but also demonstrates its action orientation. It also highlights the multifaceted nature of Chutzpah in advertising contexts. In turn, to be perceived as Chutzpadik, it seems advertising campaigns should incorporate a portfolio of characteristics. For example, while being irreverent by itself is unlikely to be perceived as Chutzpadik, a combination of irreverence with eccentricity (unconventionality) would be more likely to be perceived as Chutzpadik by an audience (even though they might not use the term themselves, and differences in perceptions notwithstanding). Examples of organizations utilizing Chutzpadik advertising include the US-based Health Education Council, the Daelim Motor Company, and Nike (see Appendix B for more details of these Chutzpadik advertising campaigns).

#### 2.4. The effectiveness of advertising

After decades of research on the effectiveness of advertising, questions remain, including its drivers (Maniu & Zaharie, 2014) and its operationalization (e.g. Bellman et al., 2019). Broadly speaking, an advertisement is deemed effective if it achieves its immediate objectives and thereby increases a firm's level of success (cf. Ramanujam et al., 1986). There are both diagnostic and evaluative metrics (McAlister et al., 2016). For Chutzpadik advertising, we advocate the use of attention-related diagnostic metrics (e.g. awareness, interest, and intrigue; see Jung et al., 2012; Moldovan et al., 2019), given its links to controversial advertising. Multiple studies in the field of psychology and advertising have established that a longer period of attention given to an object generates a stronger memory of it (e.g. Jin, 2003). Moreover, advertisements that more ably capture audiences' attention are those that break through the advertising clutter (Dahlén & Edenius, 2007) – the very purpose of controversial advertising. In turn, Chutzpadik-driven attention should be positively related to other intended advertising outcomes (e.g. purchase intentions).

### 3. Two qualitative studies of the characteristics of Chutzpadik advertising

#### 3.1. General methodology

Qualitative methods are warranted when there is a paucity of research within a domain (Belk, 2017), as is the case here. In particular, there is no conceptual or operational definition of Chutzpah as a construct within differentiation advertising contexts. To this end, the first two studies were exploratory, with the aim of addressing Chutzpah's 'material cause' (i.e. what constitutes Chutzpah in advertising contexts; see Aristotle, 1984). Specifically, we aimed to achieve a dimensional-level delineation of Chutzpah, as understood by both advertising managers and audiences, thus ensuring a holistic stakeholder perspective (cf. Polonsky & Hyman, 2007). In turn, this assists in the development of a conceptual framework within which to examine Chutzpadik advertising's effectiveness in two subsequent studies. To achieve these objectives, interviews with 12 advertising managers and 22 audience members were conducted in Israel.

#### 3.2. Studies 1 and 2: Research design

In Study 1, 12 experienced (management-level) key informants were interviewed, from different advertising agencies, ranging from small (up to 5 employees) to large (over 70 employees) in size, including the three leading advertising agencies in Israel. Each key informant had served for several years as an "accounts manager" and so was familiar with

campaign strategy decisions. The sampling was performed using a snowball technique (Merendino et al., 2018). We started by reaching out to three managers who agreed to be interviewed, and once each interview ended, we asked them to provide us with names and contact information of two additional managers. We continued conducting the interviews until the information received from the later interviewees merely repeated that obtained in earlier interviews, indicating saturation (Saunders et al., 2018). The interview guide contained 21 semi-structured open-ended questions divided into 5 sub-sections – Chutzpah in general, the components of Chutzpah, the application of Chutzpah components in advertising, boundaries for using Chutzpah, and Chutzpah consequences. In line with Azemi et al. (2019), interviews were conducted either at the manager's office (8 interviews) or at a coffee shop (4 interviews). Interviews lasted 45–75 min, were conducted in Hebrew, and were recorded, transcribed, and translated into English before analysis.

Study 2 involved interviews with 22 members of an advertising audience. The selection of respondents aimed to achieve a sample that would be representative of the Israeli general public. Accordingly, we approached interviewees in waves, where each subsequent wave sought to recruit interviewees who would make the sample more representative. We continued performing the interviews until both representation and saturation were achieved (Saunders et al., 2018). The average age of the interviewees was 35; the sample was split equally in terms of gender. The interview guide was similar to the one used for managers, but adapted to suit the audience sample. The interviews were conducted in Hebrew, lasted 30–45 min, and took place either at the interviewees' homes (14) or at a coffee shop (8). All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated into English before analysis.

#### 3.3. Analysis

A three-stage content analysis was conducted for both studies, based on Gioia and colleagues' methodology (e.g. Corley & Gioia, 2011; Gioia et al., 2013). In the first instance, we identified first order codes based on the concepts emerging from the raw data (open coding) (see Strauss & Corbin, 1998). At the second stage, we performed a content analysis based on the coded transcripts, focusing on groups of interviewees (managers/audience) to identify common categories. This axial coding focused on identifying relationships among the first order codes and resulted in more abstract second order themes. We allowed both to emerge freely (cf. Corley & Schinoff, 2017). This open coding was followed by a third stage, where we identified aggregate dimensions (categories). During the later stages, we returned at times to the transcripts to validate or substantiate a pattern or insight that had emerged (Jennings et al., 2015).

#### 3.4. Summary of interview findings

The advertising managers painted Chutzpah as a rich, multifaceted construct, and used terms such as "creativity", "originality", "bluntness", "boldness", "transgression", "irreverence", "defiance", "inconsideration", and "rudeness".

"Chutzpah is a case of extreme bluntness, transgression, and irreverence towards conventions. These are the more negative aspects of Chutzpah. It also has positive aspects, like creativity and originality. But while transgression is often regarded as negative, in the context of advertising, it can be positive." (CEO, small advertising agency 1).

Advertising audience interviewees described Chutzpah similarly. Overall, the defining characteristics of Chutzpah converged, conceptually, on three distinct sets of Hebrew synonyms pertaining to *norm violation* (e.g. transgression, irreverence), *novelty* (e.g. creativity, originality), and *audacity* (boldness, bluntness, etc.).

With regard to Chutzpadik advertising, both the managers and the

audience explained that for Chutzpah to have optimal impact, a delicate balance of positive and negative characteristics must be preserved. The managers agreed that it can be difficult to maintain such a balance, and that if lines were crossed this would undermine the intended outcome.

“I had a few campaigns which were borderline negative Chutzpah. We had a campaign for sausages. The message was 100% real meat but the image people got was of vampires, and the reactions were not good. It’s because we used Chutzpah but not in a smart way. We took vampires, who are considered negative in the tradition and religion, and we used them. We crossed a red line.” (Senior manager, small advertising agency 2)

This was echoed by some of the audience interviewees, who stated that using Chutzpah in advertising can go “too far” and needs to be strictly moderated, as “too much” Chutzpah can be counterproductive.

“I think Chutzpah is rightfully used in advertising [...] Yet, it is important to keep it in certain levels. Too much might cause hatred. So, you want to have the buzz and discussion but not the antagonism.” (Female audience member)

Both the managers and audience agreed that Chutzpah should be applied with caution, and that consideration needed to be given to the particular sensitivities of various segments of the target audience. One male audience member stated that Chutzpah should not be used in health contexts, but highlighted its usefulness in other types of advertising:

“There are cases when it is unacceptable to use Chutzpah, for example when you deal with sensitive matters such as diseases or complicated mental conditions. Also, in cases of racism and nationalism. It fits better with light subjects like commodities and vacations.” (Male audience member)

Nevertheless, some managers stated that Chutzpah is an important “success factor” in such contexts, as it can enhance the visibility of otherwise “invisible” products/services or show long-standing products in a new light.

“I think that a campaign which spots social causes people tend to ignore or suppress. This is a place where Chutzpah can serve you as a meaningful instrument to stand out and provoke the crowd. Like a campaign we had about HIV. Had the ads not been full of Chutzpah and blunt, in a positive way of course, we wouldn’t have had any sympathy nor understanding from the crowd.” (CEO, large advertising agency 3)

The fact that this respondent endorsed the use of Chutzpah for a health-related campaign, in contrast to the male audience member quoted above, underlines the subjective and perceptual nature of Chutzpah’s appropriateness for certain advertising contexts.

Both the managers and audience were explicit in their belief that Chutzpadik advertising can be effective inasmuch as it creates differentiation and has a lasting impact in a world of overexposure to advertising.

“Let’s say you have a field full of cows. And they are all white. You don’t really look at them. But suddenly you see a purple cow. This is Chutzpah – the purple cow. And that’s a known term in advertising: how to make people notice you out of the sea of information and messages around them, how to create a message that is delivered differently.” (Senior manager, large advertising agency 4)

“There can be a situation when there are a lot of adverts on a specific product, for example fashion, so when we observe so many adverts of fashion brands, they have to invent themselves and be creative so that people will remember them. In such cases it is more popular to use Chutzpah.” (Female audience member)

Fig. 1 outlines the first order coding, second order themes, and the categories from Studies 1 (managers interviews) and 2 (audience interviews) (see Appendix C for details and quotes).

From the above findings, we derived the following definition of Chutzpadik advertising: “Radical advertising messaging that purposefully transgresses social norms and proscribed topics”. This definition complements the grey literature on Chutzpah, and draws on two key areas: first, academically informed understanding of controversial advertising (e.g. the transgression of social norms), taboo advertising (e.g. the defiance of proscribed topics), and creative advertising (e.g.

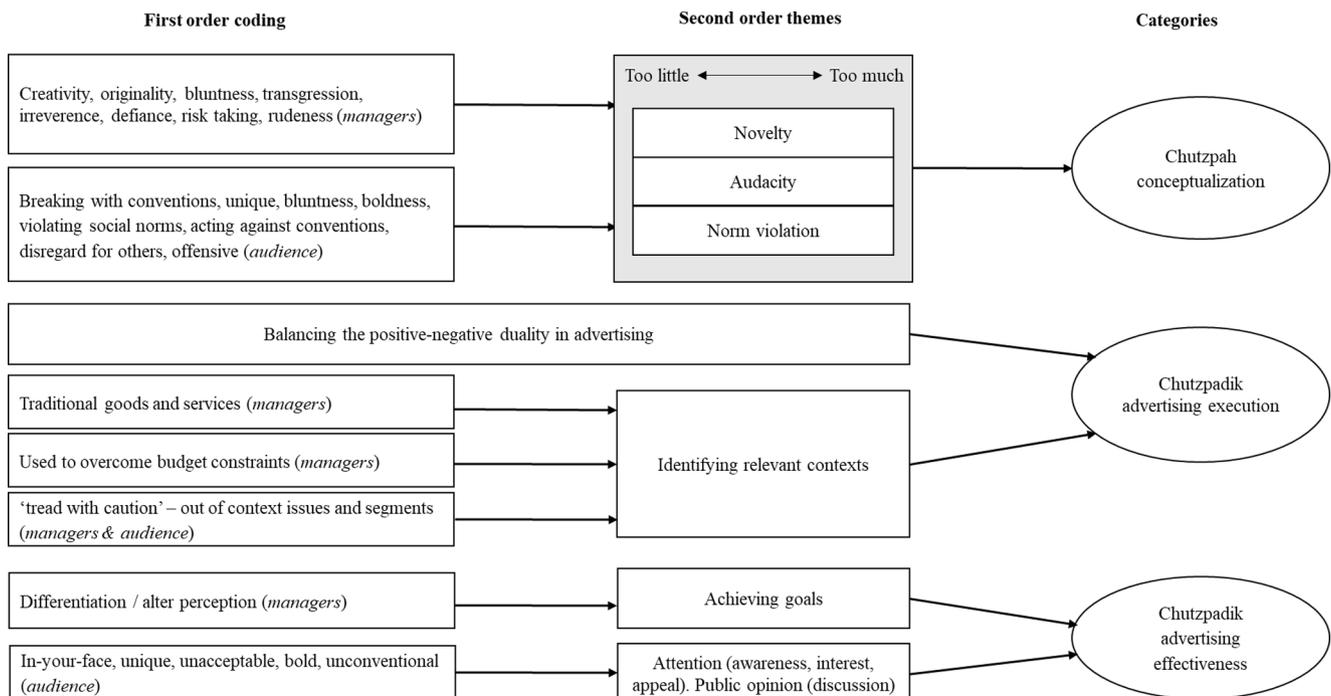


Fig. 1. Summary of the findings of the qualitative studies of managers and audience.

through radicalism – or extreme novelty); and second, empirical knowledge derived from the qualitative interviews (e.g. Chutzpadik advertising’s dimensions: novelty, norm violation, and audacity). We believe our Chutzpadik advertising definition offers differentiation advertising research and practice a cohesive platform to move forward. Indeed, Chutzpadik advertising may be the key to unlocking creative, controversial, and taboo advertising. These insights, together with a review of the literature pertaining to the three identified dimensions, allowed us to develop the following conceptual framework.

**4. Conceptual framework and hypotheses**

While highlighting the potential for Chutzpadik advertising to attract attention (e.g. awareness, interest), both advertising managers and audience respondents cautioned against developing advertisements that are too Chutzpadik. This suggests that the relationship between Chutzpadik advertising (the extent to which Chutzpadik messaging is embedded in the content of the advertisement) and its effectiveness may be quadratic, following an inverted-U curve.

With this in mind, we underpin our conceptual model (see Fig. 2) linking Chutzpadik advertising and advertising effectiveness with the “too-much-of-a-good-thing” (TMGT) principle applied to consumer contexts (e.g. Gaustad, Samuelsen, Warlop, & Fitzsimons, 2019; Sabri & Obermiller, 2012), where positive relationships reach inflection points after which relationships turn negative (Pierce & Aguinis, 2013). Further, by conceptualizing Chutzpadik advertising at the dimension level, we consider Chutzpadik advertising’s formal cause (Aristotle, 1984), and provide a more fine-grained, informative understanding of its effectiveness (cf. Franke et al., 2008).

**4.1. Norm violation**

As consumers nowadays are flooded with advertising images, norm violation is increasingly used by advertisers seeking differentiation (Giebelhausen & Novak, 2012). Norm violation is the deliberate transgression of, and irreverence to, (sacred) social values, shared expectations and personal ideas (Dahl et al., 2003), and is endemic in the

manifestation of Chutzpah. Types of norm violation in advertising include the presentation of the transgression of laws and customs, the breaching of moral or social codes, or socially unacceptable images (Chan et al., 2007).

Waller et al. (2005) claim that reactions to norm violations can be positive (Popa et al., 2014) as well as negative (Pirouz et al., 2015), depending on how audiences process the message. Relating this to advertising contexts, norm violations can help cut through information clutter (Kadić-Maglajlić et al., 2017), surprise potential customers and capture their attention in increasingly saturated commercial environments (Dahl et al., 2003), encourage debate and generate interest (Parry et al., 2013), and ensure audiences attend to messages and remember them (Vézina & Paul, 1997). This, in turn, leads to increased brand awareness and recall (e.g. Jin, 2003; Waller et al., 2005). That said, norm-violating content risks generating negative audience responses (Pirouz et al., 2015, Studies 1 and 2), including attention avoidance.

Such divergent responses can be explained through controversy- and taboo-evoked mechanisms. Taboos are generally associated with controversy (Huhmann & Mott-Stenerson, 2008; Myers et al., 2020), and both are deemed more arousing than neutral stimuli (e.g. Sabri, 2017; Roest et al., 2018), helping grab people’s attention (e.g. Madan et al., 2017). However, excessively high levels of arousal in such contexts lead to increased anxiety, inhibiting attention and information processing (Sabri and Obermiller, 2012). Moreover, people “punish” others whom they perceive to have overstepped social norm boundaries (Maxwell et al., 2003). Within the context of controversial advertising, consumers’ unease at being exposed to overly norm-violating images, words or situations can induce perceptual defense mechanisms, where consumers execute an avoidance strategy (Madan et al., 2017; Myers et al., 2020; Sabri, 2012). We therefore expect norm violation to increase the effectiveness of advertising up to a point, beyond which it will be perceived to be excessive and antagonistic, and therefore defeat its purpose. Hence:

**H1.** The relationship between norm violation and advertising effectiveness is curvilinear, tending towards an inverted U-shape.

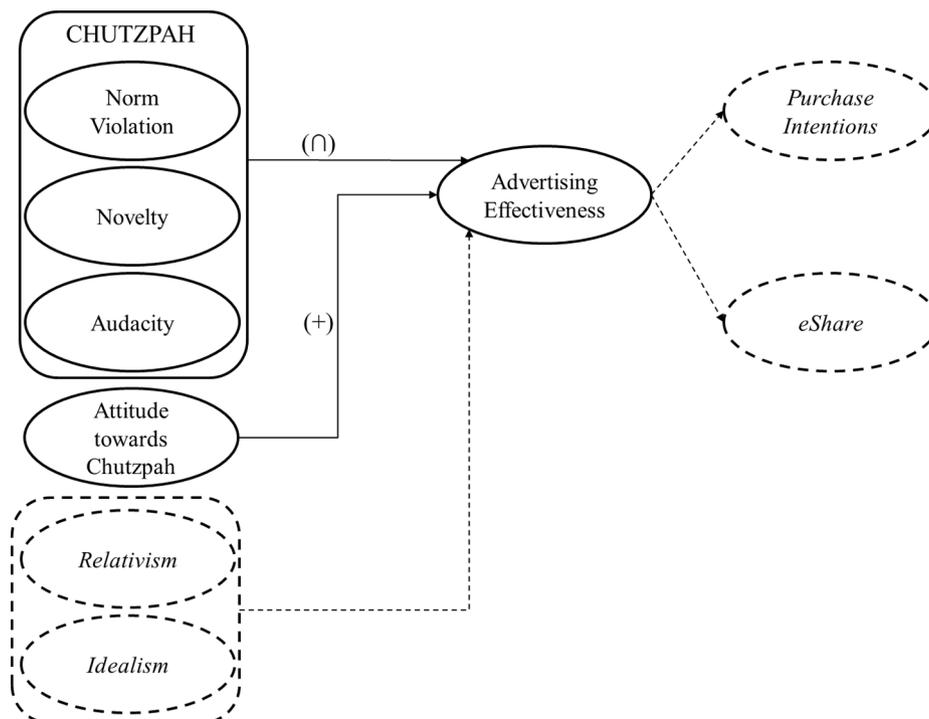


Fig. 2. Conceptual model.

#### 4.2. Novelty

Unexpected messaging helps target audiences distinguish the advertised brand from competitors, thereby increasing consumers' awareness of it (Virvilaite & Matuleviciene, 2013). Novel advertisements are distinctive and unusual by nature, and stimulate feelings of excitement (Ang et al., 2014). Thus, unsurprisingly, novel advertising is positively linked to audiences' attention and interest (Pirouz et al., 2015), and is also more likely to be watched again and shared with others (Lehnert, Till & Ospina, 2014). The advertising managers from Study 1 explained that "novelty" is the basis for a successful campaign, while audiences were most attentive and receptive to advertisements that are "in-your-face, unique, unacceptable, bold, unconventional" (see Fig. 1). Thus, in comparison with conventional advertisements, novel advertisements appear to be more interesting for viewers and attract their attention, and so are more likely to increase brand awareness (Smith et al., 2008).

That said, Fillis (2002, p. 381) claimed that "optimization of creativity is paramount to success", and suggested that too much novelty would decrease the effectiveness of an advertisement. Similarly, moderately incongruent advertisements are more optimal than congruent or extremely incongruent advertisements (Halkias & Kokkinaki, 2017). Consequently, in order to be effective, advertising should not be so novel that audiences struggle to build meaningful connections. As such, it is expected that the relationship between novelty and advertising effectiveness is also likely to be curvilinear:

**H2.** The relationship between novelty and advertising effectiveness is curvilinear, tending towards an inverted U-shape.

#### 4.3. Audacity

Not much is made of "audacious" advertising in the academic literature, aside from brief references. For instance, Cochoy (2015) suggests audacity in advertisements can have both positive and negative consequences. Similarly, Boudreau and Watson (2006) explain that while some people think Benetton's advertisements promote an appreciation of different cultures, others find them offensive. Relatedly, the #just-burnit consumer backlash in response to Nike's inclusion of American footballer and activist Colin Kaepernick in a recent campaign emphasized the double-edge sword of audacious advertising but also the financial rewards that can follow (Harper, 2020). Finally, Tsai's (2011) work highlights how using minority groups in advertisements to make audacious political statements may be received negatively by audiences who identify with that minority group. Given the paucity of references to audacious advertising, in devising our conceptual framework we supplement our empirical observations from Studies 1 and 2 with apposite literature.

Study 1 informants considered audacity within Chutzpadik advertising as the ability to create a campaign which captures audiences' attention by incorporating bold and blunt elements in the message. This notion is echoed in adventure appeals in which advertising has a tradition of using bluntness, daring, defiance, bravery, courage, etc. (e.g. Miller & Laczniak, 2011). Similarly, Study 2 respondents considered Chutzpadik advertising to be daring, suggesting this was a way for risk-taking organizations to increase interest and talking points. However, advertising managers also intimated that, while audacity in advertising can help a product to stand out, there is a danger of taking it too far. Audience respondents echoed this, explaining that while audacious advertisements can help organizations make a powerful stand, audacity is a double-edged sword.

Positive and negative responses to audacious advertising can also be explained through controversy- and taboo-evoked mechanisms. As outlined above, such stimuli generate more arousal than neutral stimuli, thereby increasing the chances of capturing audiences' attention. Moreover, an audacious advertisement is unexpected compared with the

norm, meaning audiences are more likely to notice it (Virvilaite & Matuleviciene, 2013). However, overly audacious advertising would be a step too far, as audiences become over-aroused and activate perceptual defense mechanisms (Madan, Shafer, Chan, & Singhal, 2017; Myers, Deitz, Huhmann, Jha, & Tatara, 2020; Sabri & Obermiller, 2012). As such:

**H3.** The relationship between audacity and advertising effectiveness is curvilinear, tending towards an inverted U-shape.

#### 4.4. Attitude to Chutzpah

Studies 1 and 2 support Dershowitz's (1991) view that audiences may respond differently to Chutzpah. In turn, people's attitudes towards Chutzpah will likely drive their responses to it. Indeed, a large body of research addresses the role attitudes play in shaping perception and impacting behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). Perkins and Wechsler (1996) claim that positive attitudes towards a specific behavior will enhance the impact of norms on the same behavior. Similarly, Melnyk et al. (2013) show that people's behavioral responses are strengthened if they have a positive attitude toward it. As such, Chutzpadik advertising is more likely to be effective when people respond positively to Chutzpah in general:

**H4.** A positive attitude to Chutzpah is positively related to the effectiveness of Chutzpadik advertising.

### 5. Methodology for testing hypotheses

#### 5.1. Studies 3 and 4: Research design overview

Given that different audiences can perceive the same Chutzpadik event differently, the conceptual model is most appropriately tested by (a) ensuring the advertising context is held constant and subsequent responses are captured, and (b) replicating the study in some form. With this in mind, we mirrored Studies 1 and 2 by capturing responses from advertising managers (Study 3) and advertising audiences (Study 4) in Israel.

Specifically, both sets of respondents were shown the same advert pertaining to a sexual health-related brand (Durex advert; condom), which represents an important marketing context (cf. Booth-Butterfield et al., 1997; Loroz, 2007). The message of the advertisement concerned sexual health rather than contraception. Crucially, the advertisement was commended in industry awards for its Chutzpadik advertising. Using advertisements that receive industry accolades is a significant criterion for advertising studies (Dahlén et al., 2008). Moreover, interviews with senior advertising managers from Study 1 confirmed Chutzpah's three components (dimensions) were seen to be executed in Durex's advertising campaign. Pertinently, the advertisement was launched to coincide with the World Health Organization's annual World Health Day but it was banned from mainstream television due to its controversial nature (though it could still be accessed online if people wanted to view it). This aligns with our qualitative studies, which suggested that evaluations of Chutzpah's appropriateness in health-related advertising contexts are subjective. Importantly, the condom brand falls under both taboo (Roest et al., 2018) and controversy (e.g. Leenders & Eliashberg, 2011) settings. Collectively, these factors imply ecological validity is safeguarded.

For Study 3, the managers sampling frame was a closed Facebook group whose 145 members were advertising managers representing most of the 50 advertising agencies in Israel. This group had been set up by a former senior manager of one of the three largest advertising agencies and aimed to serve as a place for getting updates and "hot news". The group manager distributed a link to our online survey to all group members, who would have been otherwise difficult to collect data from. We obtained 108 responses (a 74.5% response rate). Managers were shown the advertisement before answering questions pertaining to

the respective Chutzpadik advertising dimensions (see below), beliefs on audiences' attitudes towards Chutzpah, and advertising effectiveness. The measure of advertising effectiveness (see Appendix D) was chosen based on the ecological context, managerial objectives (e.g. Maciel & Fischer, 2020; Morey & McCann, 1983) and insights from our manager interviews.

For Study 4, the largest online panel company in Israel, iPanel, was employed to collect at least 200 responses from a sample representative of Israel's general population. In total 1376 respondents were contacted, and 209 valid questionnaires were obtained (a 15.1% response rate). Women represented 50.7% of respondents, and the average age of respondents was 44.0 years (s.d. = 15.8 years).

Study 4 was a conceptual replication of Study 3. Respondents were first asked to rate their likelihood of purchasing a number of brands in general (deodorant, toothpaste, underwear, chewing gum). Embedded in the middle of these questions was an item concerning their likelihood of purchasing a Durex condom, which acted as a measure of purchase intention before the respondent saw the Chutzpadik advertisement. Respondents were then shown the Chutzpadik condom advertisement before they answered questions on: advertisement recognition; the Chutzpadik advertising dimensions; perceived controversy and perceived taboo of the advertisement; an alternative measure of advertising effectiveness; attitude towards Chutzpah; post-advertisement purchase intention; and likelihood of sharing the online advertisement with significant others (for brevity, termed "eShare" henceforth). The alternative measure of advertising effectiveness focused on interest, which has been shown to drive the amount of attention given to an advertisement (Jin, 2003). The "eShare" measure was included because the qualitative studies had indicated the potential for Chutzpadik advertisements to go viral. Meanwhile, sharing with 'significant others' was chosen because audiences may be willing to share ads that deliberately transgress established societal norms with 'others' in their social circles but not with society at large (Sabri, 2017).

In Study 4, relativism (the extent to which individuals reject universal moral rules when making moral decisions) and idealism (the inherent interest in the welfare of others and intrinsic rightness of behavior) (Giacalone et al., 2016) were captured, as previous studies suggest these may affect the extent to which advertising is considered ethical or unethical (Treise et al., 1994), which in turn can affect the effectiveness of that advertising (LaTour & Henthorne, 1994). Capturing relativism and idealism can also help explore different types of audiences. Finally, respondents' "condom use" in general, alongside the "pre-exposure purchase intentions" measure towards the Durex brand, controlled for the specific context.

## 5.2. Operationalization of Chutzpah

Measures for the three dimensions of Chutzpadik advertising (see Appendices D and E) were developed by cross-referencing terms uncovered during the qualitative interviews (Studies 1 and 2) with items found across previous (English-language) academic studies, to determine whether existing items could be adapted for the current study. Subsequently, the collated items were back-translated to ensure they were meaningful in Hebrew (cf. Roest et al., 2018).

Next, the dimensionality of the Chutzpah items was examined by 123 members of the Israeli public who were not part of the main studies. First, three factors were extracted from the exploratory factor analyses: both principal component analysis and principal axis factoring suggested the three factors' three items generally loaded onto their respective factor as expected. Next, the data were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Here, appropriate fit indices were obtained ( $\chi^2(17) = 28.701$ ,  $p = .037$ , RMSEA = 0.08, CFI = 0.98, IFI = 0.98, GFI = 0.94), although only two of the three items comprising the audacity dimension could be retained. Two items per construct is the minimum needed for CFA (e.g. Kline, 2016). Moreover, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each factor was above the 0.5 threshold,

and the lowest AVE was higher than the highest squared correlation between the factors, highlighting the discriminant validity of the three factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The construct reliabilities ranged from 0.76 (for norm violation) to 0.88 (for novelty). Hence, the items used to measure the dimensions of Chutzpah were deemed appropriate for use in the main studies.

## 5.3. Psychometrics of the instruments used in studies 3 and 4

Overall, the CFA of the results from the sample of advertising managers (conducted in Lisrel) returned adequate fit indices ( $\chi^2(18) = 43.254$ ,  $p = .001$ , RMSEA = 0.10, CFI = 0.94, IFI = 0.94, GFI = 0.93), with two items per construct. Discriminant validity was upheld, with the lowest AVE above 0.5, and higher than the highest squared correlation between variables. The lowest construct reliability (0.64) was also above accepted norms. Finally, any potential common method variance (CMV) bias was mitigated because the sample was restricted to senior managers. A Harman's single factor test was significant ( $\Delta\chi^2(10) = 308.823$ ,  $p < .001$ ), suggesting that CMV is unlikely to be an issue (see Appendix D for the items, factor loadings, error variances, correlations, AVEs, and construct reliabilities for the data collected from managers).

The CFA of the results from the audience sample also returned good fit indices ( $\chi^2(440) = 690.402$ ,  $p < .001$ , RMSEA = 0.05, CFI = 0.96, IFI = 0.96, GFI = 0.84). Discriminant validity was upheld because the lowest AVE was above the 0.5 threshold, and the highest squared correlation between two variables was lower than the AVEs of those respective variables (Fornell & Larcker 1981). The lowest construct reliability (0.74) also exceeded accepted norms (see Appendix E for the items, factor loadings, error variances, correlations, AVEs, and construct reliabilities for the audience data).

## 5.4. Analytical procedures for testing hypotheses

To test hypotheses, we performed both unifinal structural equation modeling (SEM), and complementary equifinal qualitative comparative analysis (QCA). The former examines the strength of an antecedent's relationship with advertising effectiveness (controlling for other antecedents), while the latter enables an investigation of different configurations of the same conditions (antecedents) that produce the same outcome (Urueña & Hidalgo, 2016). QCA is particularly apposite because it facilitates an investigation of the effectiveness of various configurations of Chutzpadik advertising components.

To test the hypotheses, we first item-parceled each dimension of Chutzpadik advertising and created residual-centered squared terms for testing curvilinear (quadratic) relationships. We interpret our SEM results through both traditional null-hypothesis significance-testing (NHST) (i.e. hypotheses are supported when  $p < .05$ ) as well as the increasingly accepted 95% confidence intervals (CIs) approach, which is often required when investigating "too-much-of-a-good-thing" effects (cf. Busse et al., 2016). If both the lower and upper CI boundaries are consistently valenced (i.e. one is not positive and the other negative), the results are deemed to be statistically significant (as in NHST), irrespective of whether or not  $p < .05$ .

## 6. Findings of studies 3 and 4

### 6.1. Study 3 – Advertising managers

#### 6.1.1. Structural equation modeling

The SEM analysis returned good fit indices overall ( $\chi^2(6) = 9.013$ ,  $p = .17$ , RMSEA = 0.06, CFI = 0.98, IFI = 0.98, GFI = 0.98). Subsequently, neither norm violation squared, nor novelty squared were found to be significantly or consistently related to advertising effectiveness (normal

violation:  $\gamma = 0.140, t = 0.851, p = .21, 95\%CIs = -0.02; 0.23$ ; novelty:  $\gamma = 0.069, t = 0.610, p = .28, 95\%CIs = -0.03; 0.14$ .<sup>1</sup> Hence, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were not supported. As the hypothesized (i.e. a priori) quadratic relationships were not found, lower-order linear paths could be examined. Here, novelty was significantly and consistently positively related to advertising effectiveness ( $\gamma = 0.811, t = 5.741, p < .001, 95\%CIs = 0.62; 0.88$ ), while a non-significant and inconsistent relationship existed between norm violation and advertising effectiveness ( $\gamma = 0.002, t = 0.006, p = .50, 95\%CIs = -0.23; 0.23$ ).

By contrast, audacity squared was found to be consistently related to advertising effectiveness ( $\gamma = -0.278, t = -1.343, p = .11, 95\%CIs = -0.49; -0.08$ ), although, as is often the case, the inflection point was found to be to the left of the scale range. This suggests full support for a curvilinear (negative) effect and partial support for an inverted-U effect. Hence, hypothesis 3 was supported in part.

Finally, beliefs about audiences' attitude towards Chutzpah ( $\gamma = 0.147, t = 1.411, p = .10, 95\%CIs = 0.05; 0.28$ ) was found to be consistently related to advertising effectiveness, in support of hypothesis 4 (see Table 1).

Overall, 58.3% of advertising effectiveness was accounted for.

6.1.2. Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA)

While the SEM results suggest norm violation was not significantly related to advertising effectiveness, respondents from Studies 1 and 2 had intimated that a link does in fact exist. This implies that the components of Chutzpadik advertising (and indeed people's attitude towards Chutzpah in general) may have different effects on advertising effectiveness in qualitatively different contexts. QCA can account for this possibility.

**Table 1**  
Results of the Structural Model (Managers and Audience).

	MANAGERS		AUDIENCE	
	$\beta / \gamma$	t-value	$\beta / \gamma$	t-value
<b>Reduced Form R<sup>2</sup>: Advertising Effectiveness</b>	<b>58.3%</b>		<b>71.8%</b>	
H1: Norm Violation Squared	0.140	0.851	-0.002	-0.026
H2: Novelty Squared	0.069	0.610	0.018	0.272
H3: Audacity Squared	-0.278	-1.343	-0.104	-1.513
H4: Attitude towards Chutzpah	0.147	1.411	-0.067	-0.678
Norm Violation (Lower-Order Path)	0.002	0.006	0.338	2.322
Audacity (Lower-Order Path)	-0.114	-0.472	-0.328	-2.525
Novelty (Lower-Order Path)	0.811	5.741	0.186	2.330
Idealism (nomological validity)	n/a	n/a	0.029	0.443
Relativism (nomological validity)	n/a	n/a	-0.103	-1.654
Advertisement Recognition (control)	n/a	n/a	-0.034	-0.514
Taboo (control)	n/a	n/a	0.487	5.422
Controversy (control)	n/a	n/a	0.309	2.256
<b>Reduced Form R<sup>2</sup>: Purchase Intentions</b>	<b>n/a</b>		<b>68.7%</b>	
Advertising Effectiveness	n/a	n/a	0.142	2.532
Idealism (nomological validity)	n/a	n/a	-0.114	-2.003
Relativism (nomological validity)	n/a	n/a	0.054	0.945
Condom-use (control)	n/a	n/a	0.122	2.230
Pre-exposure Purchase Intentions (control)	n/a	n/a	0.751	11.671
<b>Reduced Form R<sup>2</sup>: eShare</b>	<b>n/a</b>		<b>40.8%</b>	
Advertising Effectiveness	n/a	n/a	0.286	2.185
Idealism (nomological validity)	n/a	n/a	0.013	0.171
Relativism (nomological validity)	n/a	n/a	-0.068	-0.892
Advertisement Recognition (control)	n/a	n/a	0.115	1.551
Taboo (control)	n/a	n/a	0.339	2.907
Controversy (control)	n/a	n/a	0.056	0.573

<sup>1</sup> 95%CIs are unstandardized values. All other estimates are standardized.

Good practice is for QCA procedures to be outlined in full so that studies are judged against minimum QCA standards (Wagemann et al., 2016). We used fsQCA 3.0 (see e.g. Ragin, 2018; Ragin & Davey, 2016). First, we averaged our multi-item measures to create a single (averaged) measure for each construct. Next, and following best practice, our calibration procedures referenced theoretical and substantive knowledge independent of the data at hand (Schneider & Wagemann, 2013). Specifically, the Likert-type scales were assumed to capture continuous interval data pertaining to qualitative statements of varying agreements, disagreements and indifference (Weijters et al., 2010). This means that each Likert-type response category label has a lower and upper limit associated with it and that any collected data are semantically meaningful when mapped to their respective response category labels. In turn, the Likert-type response category labels can be used to proportionally transform the single (averaged) measures to fuzzy scores between 0 (full non-membership) and 1 (full membership) using fuzzy set membership scaling.

As necessity should be examined before sufficiency (Wagemann et al., 2016), we investigated whether any single condition's consistency reached the necessity threshold of 0.9 (e.g. Tóth et al., 2015). The results suggested novelty (consistency = 0.9513) was the only necessary condition for high advertising effectiveness. Next, we created a "truth table" and adopted a consistency threshold of 0.85 (e.g. Brenes et al., 2019) to determine sufficiency, and used a frequency threshold of 1 (Ragin, 2018). Appendix F presents the empirically observed instances and consistencies.

All logical remainders that were not necessary conditions (i.e. all but novelty) were treated as being present or absent during counter-factual analysis. The solution's overall consistency was 0.7658, while the overall coverage score suggested 85.66% of advertising effectiveness was accounted for by the solutions. In turn, we uncovered three configurations of Chutzpadik advertising that are sufficient complex conditions for advertising effectiveness: (a) novelty and norm violation are present, while audacity and Chutzpah attitude are irrelevant (consistency = 0.7974, coverage = 0.6579); (b) novelty is present and audacity is absent, while norm violation and Chutzpah attitude are irrelevant (consistency = 0.8075, coverage = 0.6790); and (c) novelty is present and a positive Chutzpah attitude is absent, while audacity and norm violation are irrelevant (consistency = 0.8047, coverage = 0.5751). The sufficient conditions can be found in Table 2.

6.2. Study 4 – Advertising audience

6.2.1. Structural equation modeling

The SEM analysis returned good fit indices ( $\chi^2(330) = 463.345, p < .001, RMSEA = 0.04, CFI = 0.97, IFI = 0.97, GFI = 0.88$ ). Neither norm violation squared ( $\gamma = -0.002, t = -0.026, p = .49, 95\%CIs = -0.05; 0.05$ ) nor novelty squared ( $\gamma = 0.018, t = 0.272, p = .39, 95\%CIs = -0.03; 0.05$ ) was significantly or consistently related to advertising effectiveness. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were therefore not supported. However, contrary to Study 3, the linear path between norm violation and advertising effectiveness was significant and consistently positive ( $\gamma = 0.338, t = 2.322, p = .01, 95\%CIs = 0.24; 0.58$ ). Similarly, and following Study 3's results, the linear path between novelty and advertising effectiveness was found to be significant and consistently positive ( $\gamma = 0.186, t = 2.330, p = .01, 95\%CIs = 0.13; 0.31$ ). Importantly, audacity squared ( $\gamma = -0.104, t = -1.513, p = .07, 95\%CIs = -0.11; -0.02$ ) also followed Study 3's findings in being consistently as well as marginally significantly related to advertising effectiveness, with the turning point being to the left of the scale range. Hence, full support for a curvilinear (negative) effect was found, partially supporting hypothesis 3. Contrary to Study 3, the audience's attitude towards Chutzpah ( $\gamma = -0.067, t = -0.678, p = .25, 95\%CIs = -0.20; 0.04$ ) was neither significantly nor consistently related to advertising effectiveness, meaning hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Relativism was significantly and consistently negatively related to

**Table 2**  
fsQCA results of configurations for the presence of advertising effectiveness (in descending order of unique coverage).

MANAGERS							AUDIENCE								
Chutzpah Components							Chutzpah Components								
Norm Violation	Novelty	Audacity	Attitude towards Chutzpah	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Consistency	Norm Violation	Novelty	Audacity	Attitude towards Chutzpah	Relativism	Idealism	Raw Coverage	Unique Coverage	Consistency
+	+			0.6579	0.0947	0.7974	+	+					0.6176	0.0321	0.8900
+	+	-		0.6790	0.0737	0.8075	-	+	+	+			0.3664	0.0197	0.9240
+		-		0.5751	0.0224	0.8047	+	+	-	+			0.6424	0.0145	0.8779
	+	-					-	+	-	+			0.5198	0.0133	0.8919
							-	-	+	+			0.3817	0.0093	0.8872
							-	+	-	+			0.4534	0.0066	0.8627
							-	-	-	-			0.2474	0.0026	0.8398
							+	+	-	+			0.4374	0.0014	0.8933
							+		-	+			0.4395	0.0000	0.9082
Number of +	1	3	0	0	Solution coverage: 0.8566		3	5	2	1	4	8	Solution coverage: 0.8226		
Number of -	0	0	1	1	Solution consistency: 0.7658		3	0	3	4	2	1	Solution consistency: 0.7894		
Number of empty cells	2	0	2	2			4	5	5	5	4	1			

+/- indicates presence/absence of Chutzpah component/attitude towards Chutzpah; empty cells indicate 'irrelevant conditions'  
+/- indicates presence/absence of Chutzpah component/attitude towards Chutzpah; empty cells indicate 'irrelevant conditions'.

advertising effectiveness ( $\gamma = -0.103$ ,  $t = -1.654$ ,  $p < .05$ , 95 %CIs =  $-0.20; -0.05$ ), while taboo ( $\gamma = 0.487$ ,  $t = 5.422$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95 %CIs =  $0.36; 0.52$ ) and controversy ( $\gamma = 0.309$ ,  $t = 2.256$ ,  $p = .01$ , 95 %CIs =  $0.18; 0.54$ ) were significantly positive and consistently related to advertising effectiveness<sup>2</sup>. Overall, 71.8% of advertising effectiveness was accounted for.

With regard to the longer-term impacts on audiences, we found advertising effectiveness, condom use, and purchase intention before watching the Chutzpadik advertisement (which were all positively related), and idealism (negatively related) to be significant drivers of post-advertisement purchase intention, of which 68.7% was explained overall. Advertising effectiveness and taboo were also found to be significantly and positively related to eShare, of which 40.8% was explained overall.

### 6.2.2. Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA)

The fsQCA procedures followed those in Study 3. No simple (i.e. single) necessary conditions were found. The empirically observed instances and associated consistencies of all conditions can be found alongside the managers' findings in Appendix F. The solution's overall consistency for audiences was 0.7894, while the overall coverage score was 82.26%. Nine sufficient combinations of antecedents for high advertising effectiveness were revealed. Most interesting was a consistent pattern of results to Study 3. In particular, three of the top four combinations of antecedents for audiences in terms of unique coverage aligned with the three sufficient combinations of antecedents for managers. Unique coverage is concerned with the non-overlapping share of advertising effectiveness a specific combination of antecedents has (Urueña & Hidalgo, 2016). Hence, unique coverage revealed a distinctive route to advertising effectiveness through an exclusive combination of antecedent conditions. Specifically, high advertising effectiveness exists when: (a) novelty and norm violation are present (as per manager findings) and audiences are idealists; (b) novelty is present and audacity

is absent (as per manager findings) and audiences are idealists; and (c) novelty is present and a positive attitude towards Chutzpah is absent (as per manager findings) and audiences are idealists. All nine conditions are presented in Table 2 alongside the managers' findings.

### 6.3. fsQCA robustness checks

We found that the configural paths in the managers sample to be subsets of the configural paths found in the audience sample, providing strong initial evidence that our respective Chutzpadik advertising fsQCA configurations are stable across samples. Next, we analyzed the respective configurations of conditions that exist when advertising effectiveness is absent (see Appendix G), before conducting more formal robustness checks (see Appendix H). Collectively, our checks demonstrate stability across various parameters and our overall results can therefore be considered robust.

## 7. Discussion and implications

There is a long tradition of advertising research, including in the *Journal of Business Research* (e.g. Myers et al., 2020; Spielmann & Richard, 2013; Zinkhan & Watson, 1996). Our paper makes an important contribution to this stream of work by developing a conceptual, multidimensional, understanding of the construct of Chutzpadik advertising. In particular, we conceptually (Kaartemo & Nyström, 2021; Kohtamäki et al., 2019) and empirically differentiate Chutzpadik advertising from controversial and taboo advertising within the broader setting of differentiation advertising, and unpack the factors that influence the effectiveness of Chutzpadik advertising. This is important insofar as advertising research focusing on differentiation has typically considered controversial and taboo advertising as vehicles for differentiation (Erdogan, 2008; Myers et al., 2020).

Studies 1 and 2 provide a coherent identification of the three components (dimensions) of Chutzpah – norm violation, novelty and audacity – as well as an indication of the outcomes of Chutzpadik advertising. Studies 3 and 4 test hypotheses largely developed from Studies 1 and 2. Importantly, Chutzpah's operationalization demonstrates how the three Chutzpadik components differentially impact the effectiveness of the advertising (cf. Franke et al., 2008). Specifically, we found significant linear relationships between Chutzpah's components and advertising effectiveness, while one component (audacity) had a

<sup>2</sup> In substantive terms this means the advertising effectiveness of Chutzpadik advertising increases when (a) the advertisement is perceived as less taboo, and (b) when Chutzpah is increasingly controversial, thus providing further supporting evidencing of a distinction between the two concepts in our health-related study context (cf. Kadić-Maglajlić et al. 2017; Myers et al. 2020; Roest et al., 2018).

significant curvilinear relationship with effectiveness. Together, these results go some way to explain why people's responses to the same Chutzpadik advertisement might vary (cf. [Dershowitz, 1991](#); [Guggenheim, 1998](#)). That is, if the three components of Chutzpadik advertising differentially (i.e. positively or negatively, linearly or curvilinearly) drive its effectiveness, and different people perceive there to be differing levels of those components, it is easy to comprehend why some people may find an advertisement too Chutzpadik while others perceive it to have too little or just the right amount of Chutzpah. In turn, advertising effectiveness is impacted.

Our work also involved examining both managers' (producers/encoders) and audiences' (receivers/decoders) perspectives on Chutzpadik advertising, allowing us to present a holistic stakeholder perspective ([Belk, 2017](#); [Polonsky & Hyman, 2007](#)). Our studies uncovered many consistencies across the two samples, but also some interesting differences.

First, across both samples, advertising effectiveness appears highest at lower levels of audacity, with this relationship being increasingly negative as audacity increases. This finding has important theoretical implications for advertising research. For instance, it is purported that people "get used" to audacious elements in campaigns (e.g. [Bachnik & Nowacki, 2018, p. 17](#)), implying they would respond to audacious adverts in a similar manner to conventional adverts. Conversely, we find (perceptions of) progressively audacious advertisements appear to increasingly turn people off. Thus, organizations should be cognizant of (perceived) audacity levels if Chutzpadik advertisements are to be effective.

Second, and consistent across the two samples and both the qualitative and quantitative studies, novelty in Chutzpadik advertising is consistently linked to its effectiveness. The quantitative analysis reveals a positive linear relationship while the qualitative comparative analysis suggests novelty can (essentially) be omnipresent for high advertising effectiveness to exist in both samples (even for the sufficient conditions with lower unique coverages in the audience sample, novelty does not appear to reduce effectiveness because it never needs to be absent for high advertising effectiveness to exist). However, this is not the full story. Instead, novelty's presence may be conjugated with norm violation or a lack of audacity, for both samples. The analysis of absence of advertising effectiveness (see Appendix G) further emphasizes the importance of novelty in Chutzpadik advertising. Novelty is absent when advertising effectiveness is absent and this holds for both the managers and the audience samples. These findings are in line with current thinking that novelty is a necessary but not sufficient condition for an advertisement to be effective (e.g. [Ang et al., 2014](#); [Moldovan et al., 2019](#); [Spielmann & Richard, 2013](#)).

Norm violation was positively related to advertising effectiveness for the audience sample only, and also present for a number of complex configurations (although it was present in only one equifinal solution in the managers sample). Even so, norm violation was also found to be irrelevant on a number of occasions for both samples, and also absent for some audience configurations. These findings are surprising, given that norm violation is purported to cut through information clutter ([Kadić-Maglajlić et al., 2017](#)), facilitating advertising effectiveness. That said, norm violation is present or irrelevant in more sufficient complex conditions in the audience sample than it is absent, and cumulatively these conditions represent a much higher percentage of unique coverage. Combining this knowledge with the positive relationship found between norm violation and effectiveness in the SEM analysis, the findings suggest it is (generally) better for norm violation to be more present than absent. Moreover, norm violation's absence is often linked with a lack of effectiveness in the managers sample (while the number of times norm violation is present, absent, or irrelevant was equal for the audience sample). Collectively, these findings suggest norm violation's absence is, in general, likely to be linked to low advertising effectiveness while its presence is, *overall*, unlikely to harm advertising effectiveness (although there are some unique circumstances where specific antecedent

conjugations result in norm violation needing to be absent for advertising effectiveness to ensue).

Managerially, the results have implications for designing and executing Chutzpadik advertising campaigns, especially in relation to its components. Chutzpadik advertisements should not incorporate too much audacity but should be highly novel and (generally) norm violating if they are to stand the best chance of grabbing an audience's attention. Yet, our results also suggest advertising professionals fail to see the full benefits of violating norms within an advertisement (as evidenced by its 'irrelevance' in two of the three complex conditions). Specifically, our results indicate audiences will, in general, not be put off by norm-violating advertisements and may even respond increasingly positively to them (cf. [Popa et al., 2014](#)). Hence, our results provide a first indication that, while audiences may be turned off by too much Chutzpah overall (Study 2), they are generally not turned off by norm-violating Chutzpadik messaging specifically (Study 4). Instead, in a world where over-exposure to conventional advertisements creates a sense of fatigue and boredom, audiences appear to welcome norm-violating Chutzpadik messaging, particularly if advertisements also incorporate novel messaging (cf. [Chu et al., 2019](#); [Smith et al., 2008](#); [Swani et al., 2013](#)). Finally, there was little evidence to suggest that audiences need to have a positive attitude towards Chutzpadik advertising for it to be effective. This implies that advertising managers need not think too hard about whether audiences (at least Israeli audiences) like Chutzpah in advertising executions or not.

## 8. Limitations and future research directions

While Chutzpah and Chutzpadik advertising feature across the globe (e.g. [Guggenheim, 1998](#); [Myers et al., 2017](#); [Tyrmand, 2014](#); [Wee, 2018](#); [White, 2010](#)), we limited our studies to Israel. Israel is the best setting for an etymologically-related understanding of Chutzpah within advertising settings, which may also provide a directly translatable use of the term for future work. Chutzpah is also well established in Israeli culture, making the Israeli advertising context a good testbed for an initial investigation. Israel has also transitioned from a social-collectivist nation to a more individualistic nation, meaning Israeli advertising/PR increasingly resembles that of other Western countries ([Roth-Cohen & Magen, 2017](#)). Hence, it is reasonable to assume our studies have some implications for other nations (particularly Western countries). Still, our findings should be generalized across other cultural contexts with caution. We acknowledge that advertising managers and audiences in English-speaking countries (e.g. the UK, the USA) might be less familiar with the term "Chutzpah" than Israeli populations. Thus, interpretation of the word "Chutzpah" outside of Israel should be investigated, and in particular cross-national measurement equivalence of the Chutzpadik advertising construct should be assessed.

Moreover, results may diverge between highly individualistic and highly collectivist nations (see e.g. [Stamkou et al., 2019](#)). Similarly, religious and cultural differences exist in taboo and controversial advertising contexts (e.g. [Salam et al., 2019](#)), meaning it is reasonable to assume there will be some differences regarding responses to Chutzpadik advertising too. Hence, future research should explore the relevance of Chutzpah in advertising contexts and its impact on advertising effectiveness across cultures.

In our quantitative research we employed one type of Chutzpadik advertisement (namely, a sexual health brand), and research is required to compare different types of adverts as well as explore the fit between the advertisement and the promotional context. For example, in light of the major role advertising plays in raising awareness of the need for environmental sustainability ([Bachnik & Nowacki, 2018](#)), coupled with the need for longer-term behavioral change, investigations could examine whether Chutzpadik advertising is useful in drawing attention to environmental issues (see e.g. [Glozer & Morsing, 2020](#)). Our research provides a foundation to expect such campaigns to be more effective if they incorporate, for example, norm-violating and novel executions,

rather than a high level of audacity.

Glozer and Morsing's (2020) work also outlines the performative role of (perceived) humor in advertising contexts, which offers another fruitful research direction. Humor is known to modulate people's attention (Hildebrand & Smith, 2014). In advertising contexts, humor can grab people's attention as well as provoke longer-term, critical thinking (Glozer & Morsing, 2020), paralleling Chutzpadik advertising's raison d'être. In turn, it is plausible (perceived) humor interacts with the dimensions of Chutzpadik advertising, such that advertising effectiveness is differentially affected (cf. Hildebrand & Smith, 2014) for different types of people. Consequently, furthering knowledge of the impact of (perceived) humor in Chutzpadik advertising contexts is warranted.

Finally, our quantitative studies captured advertising effectiveness through explicit attention-related measures (i.e. through Likert-type scales). While appropriate for the current research design, future work should consider implicit measures of attention and/or measures that allow for finer-grained responses and a greater range of responses to advertising (cf. Bellman et al., 2019). To build on work recently published in the *Journal of Business Research* (e.g. Myers et al., 2020) future investigation of Chutzpadik advertising could include eye-tracking techniques to understand both the immediate and the longer-term effects (see e.g. Miller & Unsworth, 2020) of such campaigns rather than relying on explicit measures; it will in turn allow for greater understanding of how the three components of Chutzpadik advertising influence audiences' attention and longer-term behaviors. Alternatively, the extent to which Chutzpadik advertising impacts performance metrics such as sales and market share, and/or costs associated with regulatory fines from national advertising standards agencies due to organizations' global (standardized) Chutzpadik advertising campaigns is worthy of investigation. It is quite possible invert-U relationships between Chutzpadik advertising components and advertising effectiveness are found in such studies.

## 9. Conclusion

Our research provides both theoretical and empirical grounding for Chutzpah within differentiation advertising, and advances our knowledge of the effectiveness of advertising. We also contribute to the literature by examining a fine-grained, multi-faceted concept within controversial and taboo advertising contexts. Indeed, the relatively weak correlations between controversy, taboo (both control factors in our quantitative studies) and the components of Chutzpah, as well as the substantive relationships of the latter with advertising effectiveness, highlight the specific impact Chutzpah can have on effectiveness, within our studies' advertising context at least. Finally, while our studies provide a good testbed for a more in-depth understanding of Chutzpah within advertising settings, we believe there is still much to learn regarding the relationship(s) between Chutzpah and performance outcomes in other settings.

## Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## Appendix A. Supplementary material

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.08.050>.

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