Mindlink

the salt inc

THE INSTANT NOODLE REPORT

Health Wins in India's Instant Noodle Category

Instant noodles are sold as the cheapest thing on the shelf. This read of 1,006 Indians says the shelf is the wrong argument. Price is the weakest lever in the category, health is the strongest, and what the packet *means* shifts by age, region and gender while the aisle stays the same.

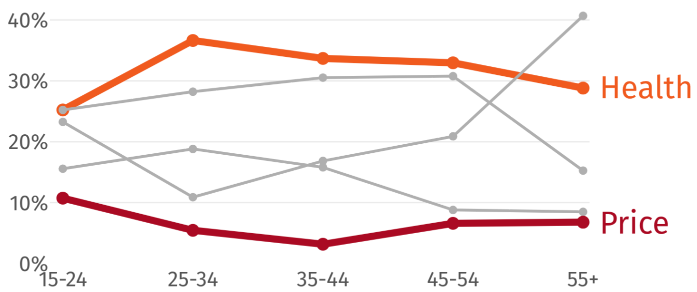
1,006 respondents **5** questions **23** day field **8** mindset groups

FINDING 01

Price is the last reason anyone switches noodle brands

A health promise moves **29%** of the category. Price moves **8%** and ranks dead last in every age band, every region, both metro cuts and six of eight groups.

WHY IT MATTERS Promotional depth is buying volume the category was already going to concede.



THE EIGHT MINDSET GROUPS

Free-Spirited. Add-ons, company; noodles as a shared moment.

Ambitious. Experimental, dry-snacking; a meal-and-format seeker.

Geek. Solo, treats it as a meal; closest to price-sensitive.

Reformer. Late-night, variety-seeking; reaches for it when low.

Believer. Out-of-home, popularity-led; eats plain, at the thela.

Explorer. Snacker, cooks with friends; led by popularity.

Mediator. Experimental, variety-led; small group.

Trailblazer. Snacks alone; quick-fix, hunger-driven.

MindLink psychographic groups, built from behavioural and attitudinal markers across 100,000+ respondents.

HOW WE READ THIS

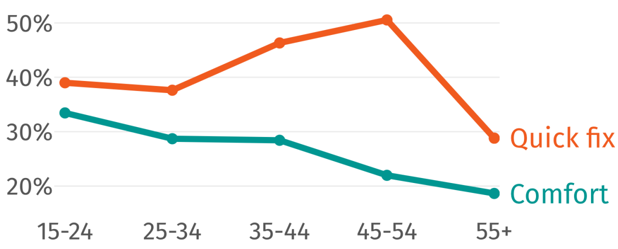
Respondents reached through paid social and search, profiled on arrival, sorted into eight psychographic groups. Findings flagged only where the gap is wide enough to plan against.

FINDING 02

The older the buyer, the more noodles are a shortcut, not a treat

Quick fix rises from **39%** at 15-24 to **51%** at 45-54. Comfort food falls the opposite way, **34%** to **22%**.

WHY IT MATTERS One emotional platform underperforms on half the buyers it reaches.

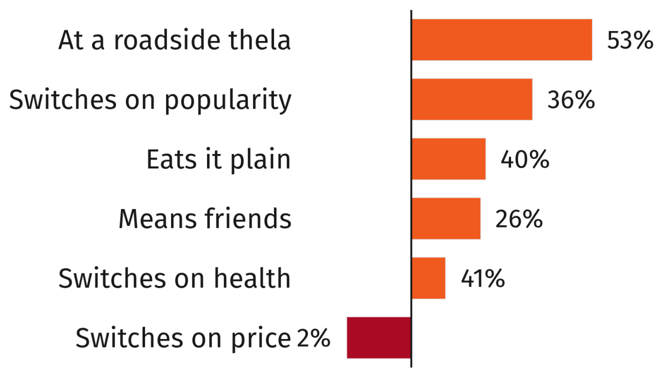


FINDING 03

Your most popularity-led buyers eat at the thela, not at home

The Believer is **9%** of buyers. **53%** eat at a roadside thela against 17% overall, and only **2%** switch on price.

WHY IT MATTERS This demand is won out of home on visible popularity, not on shelf.

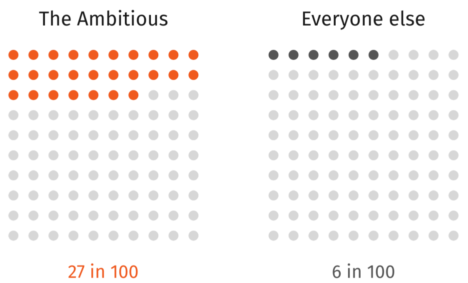


FINDING 04

One buyer group eats noodles dry, straight from the pack

The Ambitious is **8%** of buyers. **27%** eat it raw and crunchy against 8% overall, and they are the one group a health promise *under*performs on.

WHY IT MATTERS A format opening, and the one group to exclude from health targeting.

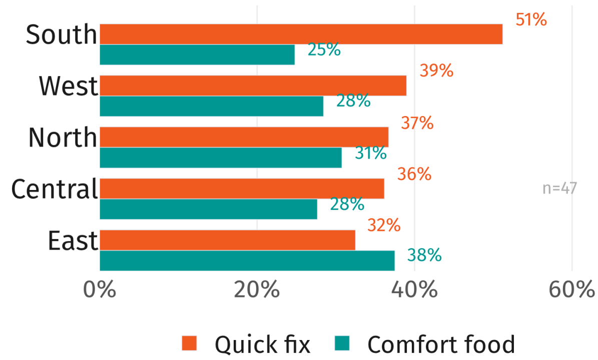


FINDING 05

The South eats noodles to save time, the East to feel good

In the South, **51%** call noodles a quick fix. In the East, **38%** call them comfort food. Same product, opposite jobs.

WHY IT MATTERS A single national line lands as functional in one half of the country and cold in the other.

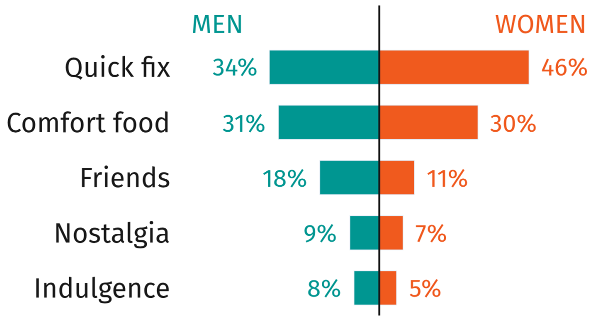


FINDING 06

Women buy noodles to save time, men to share a moment

Women call it a quick fix **46%** of the time against **34%** for men, who lean heavily to the shared and social read.

WHY IT MATTERS The same product is a solo utility to one buyer and a social one to the other.



WHAT HOLDS EVERYWHERE

Hunger is the number-one job across all eight groups. **Health** is the strongest pull to a new brand in four of five age bands and regions.

Everything else, the mood, the format, the meaning, splits by who is buying.

THE SINGLE MOVE Lead on health nationally, then flex the reason to buy by age, region and gender.

NO DEFAULT WAY TO EAT IT

Five preparation styles split almost evenly, **25%** to **16%**. No single habit owns the category, leaving room for a format-led entry.

WHY THIS SCALES TO NICHE AUDIENCES

Every behaviour below is a named, reachable group with a mindset and a map handle. Four sit under one in eleven buyers, and MindLink still reads each one cleanly. The method finds a plannable audience long after a conventional survey runs out of base.

BEHAVIOUR	%	WHO CARRIES IT
Solo eaters	**34%**	Geek, Trailblazer
Health switchers	**29%**	Believer, age 25-34
Experimental cooks	**20%**	Ambitious, Central
Midnight eaters	**18%**	Reformer
Roadside thela	**17%**	Believer, East

BEHAVIOUR	%	WHO CARRIES IT
Meal, not snack	**16%**	Geek
Price switchers	**8%**	Age 15-24, East
Nostalgia-led	**8%**	Ambitious, West
Raw and crunchy	**8%**	Ambitious, 55+
Indulgence-led	**7%**	Ambitious, North

Note. *The 55+ band (n=59) reads as an older occasional user who treats the packet as an ingredient and switches on recommendation. The Mediator group (3.6% of sample) sits below the media-ready floor and is named, not targeted.*