

A close-up photograph of a woman with light brown hair, wearing a bright pink shirt, smiling and eating a granola bar. The bar is partially unwrapped from its pink and white packaging. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with a wooden railing.

MINTEL

Indian consumer: Attitudes to snacking

Brands have an opportunity to boost the consumption of snacks by specifically targeting needs of less-frequent snackers.



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Snacking market in India - What you need to know?

Packaged snacks have yet to reach their potential

The habit of snacking is well-entrenched among Indians. As many as eight out of ten consumers have snacked in the last six months leaving a little room for getting new snackers on board. While almost half of Indian consumers snack at least once a day, almost a third of consumers are non-regular* snackers. Opportunity lies in further driving the frequency of snacking.

Today, anything can be a snack

Indians have a wide repertoire of snacks. In fact, over two out of five snackers eat more than 13 different types of snack foods. The competition to tap the snacking occasion is coming from beyond traditional snacks and confectionery categories. Yogurt, dairy drinks and cheese, among others, are also looking to leverage snacking opportunity.

The role of snacks has become multi-faceted

The significant role snacks play in total food intake demands for them to address functionality as well as sensory satisfaction. While taste is a given, snacks are also expected to provide energy in the morning, satiety and nutrition in the afternoon, and fun and indulgence later in the day. Being mindful of these nuances is key.

* non-regular snackers are those who snack "once a week" or "a few times a week"



What do Indian consumers snack on?

Snacking is synonymous to eating salty snacks. This is also partially because of the wide variety of traditional and Western salty snacks available in the Indian market. Potato chips and mixture are the most commonly eaten snacks in India.

Other than salty snacks, Indian consumers snack on fresh fruits, Indian sweets and bakery items among a range of other things including chocolates, nuts and yogurt.

Indians have a wide repertoire of food items eaten as a snack, with over two out of five consumers eating more than 13 different types of snacks. This reflects the competition in the market to tap into the snacking opportunity.

Snacking is undoubtedly benefiting from the perceived hectic pace of modern life, which is driving demand for convenient, portable and flexible products.

98%

of snackers have eaten some variety of salty snacks in the last six months

Base: 2,629 Indian adults aged 18+ who have eaten snacks in the last 6 months
Source: Ipsos Observer/Mintel



Opportunity to offer occasion-specific snacks

The issue

Today, everything can be a snack and that's a challenge. Snackable products are being launched from beyond traditional snack and confectionery categories including yogurt, cheese and dairy drinks, among other categories, proving to be the next big competition. Moreover, with the proliferation of online food delivery platforms like Swiggy and Zomato, consumers can order any food item at any time and eat it as a snack.

The opportunity

That anything can be a snack is a bane as well as a boon. Spoiled for choice and easy availability spurs consumers' propensity to eat more frequently in between set meals. The higher the frequency of snacking, the greater the opportunity for snacking brands to leverage. Creating differentiated propositions by addressing relevant need states will remain key as competition heats up.



Snack in a bar format

While the big brands have shied away from snack bars as a format (with the exception of legacy brands introducing a few products), a slew of innovations have been introduced in the market by start-up brands.

Thanks to these start-up innovations, Indian consumers are exposed to snacks in bar format, which otherwise has been limited to chocolates or protein bars targeted at sportsmen, athletes or gym-goers. Moreover, the initial versions of snack bars introduced in the Indian market failed because their taste was not suited to the Indian palate.

If snack bar brands are able to offer taste to the liking of Indian consumers, the format has potential to grow in the Indian market, thanks to the convenience that it offers.

17%

of consumers have eaten cereal/
energy bars in the last six months

Base: 2,629 Indian adults aged 18+ who have eaten snacks in the last 6 months

Source: Ipsos Observer/Mintel



What this means for companies and brands

Snacks can play a bigger role in daily food intake

Even though the habit of snacking is ingrained among Indians, as snacking occurrences become more planned and purposeful, there's room to grow frequency of consumption – from a few times a week to daily and from once to multiple times a day.

Day-part-specific offerings can fuel growth

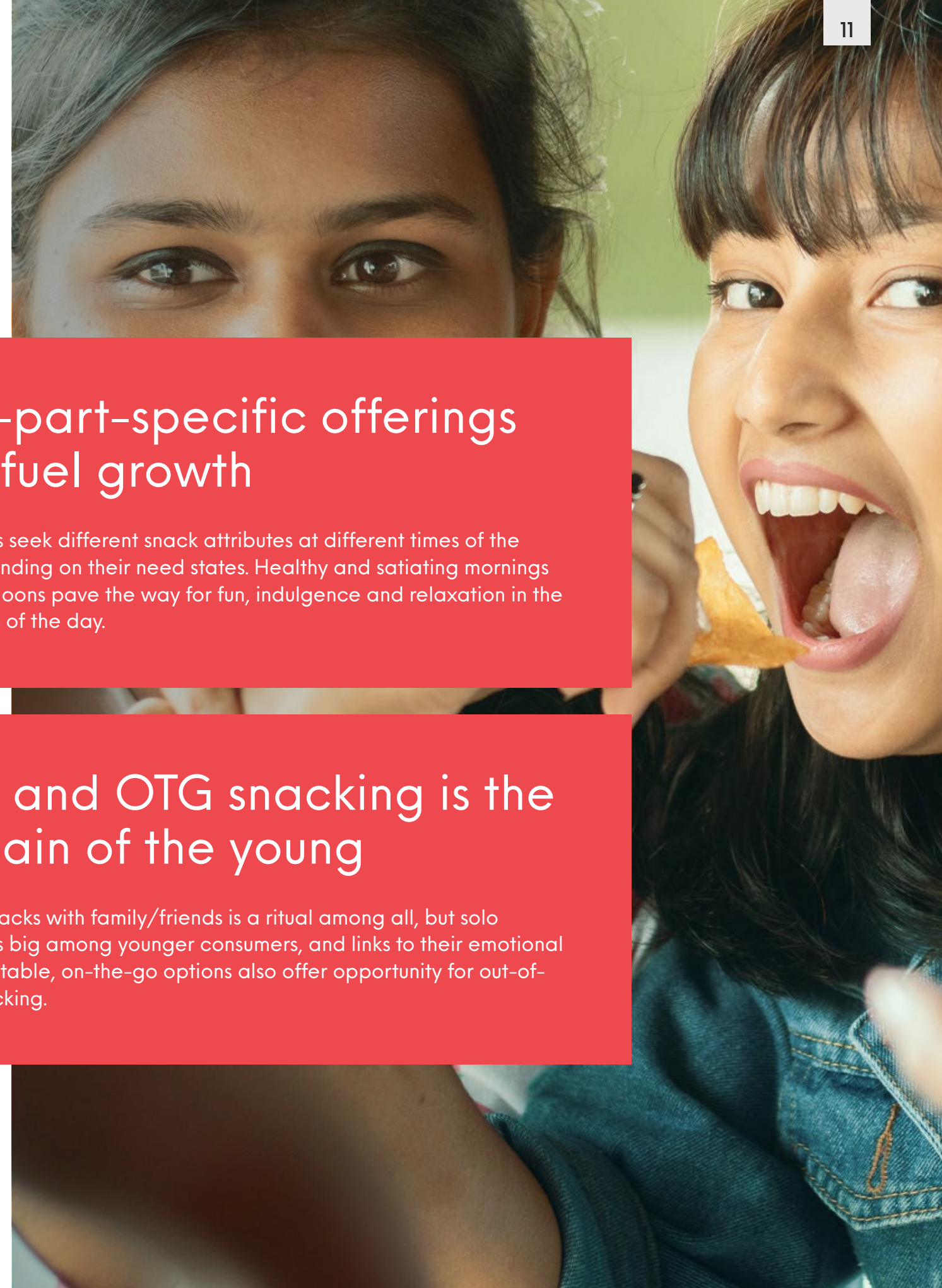
Consumers seek different snack attributes at different times of the day, depending on their need states. Healthy and satiating mornings and afternoons pave the way for fun, indulgence and relaxation in the later parts of the day.

BFY snacks can drive purposeful consumption

Better-for-you (BFY) snacks can help non-regular snackers like older consumers meet their health goals on a daily basis. BFY kids' snacking is a white space that, if tapped, can also push parents to snack more often.

Solo and OTG snacking is the domain of the young

Sharing snacks with family/friends is a ritual among all, but solo snacking is big among younger consumers, and links to their emotional needs. Portable, on-the-go options also offer opportunity for out-of-home snacking.





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