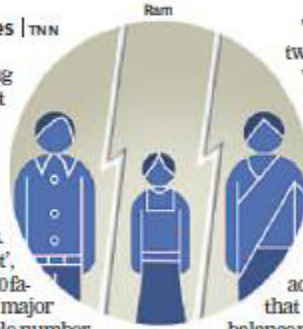


# No time for the child, rue parents in metros

Joeanna Rebello Fernandes | TNN

**Mumbai:** If you're a working parent in a big city, you don't need a commissioned survey to tell you that the amount of time you spend with your children is less than ideal. But a study now nails the fact with stats. Called 'Together Quotient', the survey of more than 1,800 fathers and mothers in six major metros reveals that a sizeable number of parents feel unsatisfied with the levels of involvement with the child.

In Mumbai, when asked to rate their involvement on a four-option scale, only 50% parents in Mumbai claimed to be 'extremely involved' in the lives of their children, with 'extremely involved' being the highest rung in the A C Nielsen study



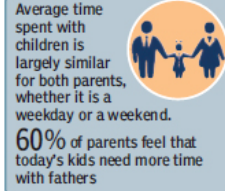
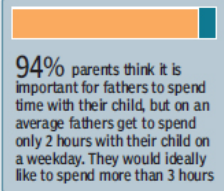
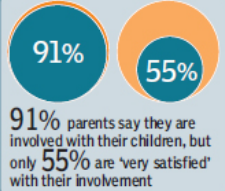
The parents surveyed were between the age of 26 and 45 years, with children in the age group of 6 to 12 years. The cities scanned were Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad, with an average household income of Rs 18,000 a month.

Expectedly, 70% parents across the six cities complained that a disproportionate work-life balance negatively impacts the involvement with their child. Belying the belief that mothers spend more time with their children, the survey reveals that both working parents spent more or less the same amount of time with their offspring—only two hours a day on weekdays, and four hours on weekends.

► 'Kids need more time with dads', P 2

## INVOLVEMENT

A SURVEY SHOWS THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF PARENTS FEEL UNSATISFIED WITH THE LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT WITH THEIR CHILD



# All work, no play makes dad a sad parent

► From P 1

Given that many urban mothers have joined their partners on the corporate treadmill, causing them to clock comparable hours, this fact doesn't shock. But it does surprise given the fact that although men and women were polled in almost equal numbers, only 20% of the women were working moms, while all the men were employed. Of all the parents interviewed, not a single one in Mumbai spent more than five hours on a weekday with their child, although 14% in Kolkata did manage that feat.

The survey scoped emerging attitudes towards parenting in urban settlements, with the needle pointing to a growing dissatisfaction with their home/work tightrope walk, and an admission of the need for more time and attention to children. The sample cited time, money and energy as the three main engines that could drive relations with their kids.

About 75% said the nature of their involvement is currently divided between helping kids with studies, chatting with them, snacking, and watching the telly together. Weekends are generally spent shopping, going

The study scoped emerging attitudes towards parenting, with the needle pointing to a growing dissatisfaction with home/work tightrope walk

to the movies or the mall. However, when it came to duties, while 72% parents made it to a PTA meeting (both mom and dad in equal number), only 62% accompanied their child to a doctor's appointment.

One might imagine the current crop of dual-duty mummies and daddies learning on the go, scanning how-to apps while pushing the pram. Not quite, the study conducted on behalf of Cadbury India says. "Their own experience when growing up is the most critical source for today's parents, as they learn to become a parent themselves. Published information (books, television, magazines and the internet) is the least likely source to be used," it reveals.

The study also teased out the truth that only 57% parents are of the strong view that it is their joint responsibility to bring up the child. And more than half (60%) concur that kids need more downtime with daddy.

## Demands Of Office Have Left Parents With Insufficient Time For Children, Finds Study

Yamini Panchal

**ACTIVITIES**

- Half the time parents spend with kids is for helping them with studies, chatting, snacking and watching TV.
- 75% parents engage in these activities
- On weekends, parents spend nearly 4 hours a day with their child
- On weekdays, fathers spend more time with kids on homework and chatting. On weekends, they spend time watching TV and going to malls or movies or for shopping

**WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

- Only 44% of fathers are very satisfied with work-life balance; 69% say this balance affects interaction with the child
- 86% parents are satisfied with their work-life balance; 70% feel the skewed balance impacts involvement with the child
- Time, money and energy is needed for more involvement with children

**INFLUENCE**

- Experience of growing up is more important to parenting than books, TVs, magazines, etc
- 86% fathers see the relationship with their child to be different from the relation with their dad. The reasons are—seeing father more as a friend, better education and awareness

### INVOLVEMENT

Overall how involved would you say your/your husband is with your child?

	DELHI	MUMBAI	KOLKATA	BANGALORE	HYDERABAD	CHENNAI
Respondents Base	305	296	310	308	300	300
Extremely involved	50	50	47	58	25	61
Very involved	85	95	90	90	99	88

### ACTIVITIES

Which of the following have you done with your child in the last one year?

	ALL	FATHERS	MOTHERS
Respondents Base	1,819	910	909
Went to your child's parent-teacher meeting	72	72	72
Went on an outstation trip with your child	71	71	71
Attended any function in your child's school	68	65	70
Accompanied your child to their doctor's appointment	62	62	62

### SPENDING TIME

How many hours on an average does you/your husband spend with your child on a weekday?

	DELHI	MUMBAI	KOLKATA	BANGALORE	HYDERABAD	CHENNAI
Respondents Base	305	296	310	308	300	300
Less than an hour	5	10	2	26	1	58
1-2 hours	61	80	43	55	27	39
3-4 hours	31	9	42	18	64	1
More than 5 hours	3	0	14	1	9	2
Average (in hrs)	2.2	1.6	2.8	1.8	3.1	1.3
Expected (in hrs)	2.9	2.9	4.5	2.6	4.4	2.5
On a weekend?						
Less than an hour	0	3	1	4	0	9
1-2 hours	6	18	15	22	5	29
3-4 hours	31	13	52	35	49	21
More than 5 hours	62	66	32	39	45	41

### WORK-LIFE BALANCE - FATHERS

How satisfied are you with your work-life balance?

	DELHI	MUMBAI	KOLKATA	BANGALORE	HYDERABAD	CHENNAI
Respondents Base	147	154	157	161	147	144
Very satisfied	48	45	41	54	22	54
Somewhat satisfied	91	88	82	79	99	85

Note: All figures in per cent

I'm lucky to live 20 minutes away from the office and that allows me around five hours with my two-year-old everyday. I reach work by 9.30am, but I make sure to leave by 6pm, come what may. There was a time when I worked in Andheri and had a long commute, but I negotiated with my employers for lower pay in exchange for fewer hours of work

— **Doreen Karadia** | PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONAL

I see my 12-year-old daughter first thing in the morning before she leaves for school. And it's a rule at our home that the family should have dinner together, at the dining table and with no television. It's a concerted effort and I try to do my best

— **Purnedo Shorey** | A GENERAL MANAGER IN A SHIPPING FIRM

It's really not about the number of hours parents spend with their kids, but about the quality of time spent. Watching TV together gives the feeling of engagement when it is simply passive unwinding for both. While it is virtually impossible for working parents to spend a lot of time with their children today, it is possible for them to give their child focused, undivided attention

— **Dr Minnu Bhosale** | CONSULTING PSYCHOTHERAPIST AND COUNSELLOR

Parents don't need to feel guilty about spending less time with their children because current work-life conditions dictate tougher terms. Parents try to compensate for their absence by addressing the child's wants instead of his/her needs. If a child's wants alone are appeased, he/she learns to value his/her self based on material possessions

— **Dr Rajesh Parikh** | DIRECTOR, PSYCHIATRY RESEARCH, JASLOK HOSPITAL

**WHO WAS SURVEYED**

1,819 mothers and fathers aged 26 to 45 with children in the age group 6-12

- Urban households across six cities—Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Chennai