

**Abstract**

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic turned every aspect of the world upside-down. The lockdown left many industries needing to quickly adapt to the new virtual age, and higher education was no exception. Though the existing literature on COVID-19 is still developing, researchers have begun to delve into the difficulties that college and university educators faced as they navigated these tumultuous times. However, many look at this time with a solely negative lens, and few consider the additional layer of parenting. This study explores the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown on the professorship and parenting experiences of higher education employees and the meanings they made out of these times. I used in-depth interviews from professors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to explore the experiences of tenure-track and teaching-track educators in a way that is more holistic and more nuanced in order to capture a broader perspective. I was especially interested in how their professor-parent work-life balances were impacted, and how their responsibilities shifted as they adapted to lockdown. Thematic analysis on interviews revealed the lived experiences of higher education parent-employees, uncovering both the negative and potentially positive impacts. The results of this study yielded insights into the complexities of professorship and parenting, which I use to make recommendations for future higher education policy.