Reviewer's report

**Title:** Satisfaction with life during pregnancy and early motherhood in first-time mothers of advanced age: a population-based longitudinal study

**Version:** 2  
**Date:** 12 November 2013

**Reviewer:** Anne H Salonen

**Reviewer's report:**

I have read the manuscript entitled “Satisfaction with life during pregnancy and early motherhood in first-time mothers of advanced age: a population-based longitudinal study” and I wish to report my review.

A large population-based longitudinal data used in the study seems unique and offers great opportunities for this type of research. A possibility to combine the data with register data strengthens it even more and enables a good attrition analysis. The authors state that to their knowledge the study is the first to investigate longitudinally the association between satisfaction with life (SWL) and advanced maternal age.

Currently, the background section does not give a strong rationale for the study. The concept SWL is defined shortly; however, since previous research seems to be scarce, it might be useful to define how the concept SWL relates to similar concepts (the happiness, the quality of life, personal satisfaction etc.) and possibly refer to those studies. Since SWL is measured during pregnancy and early motherhood, it would also be essential to broaden the literature review into early interaction theory and to clarify how SWL is associated with parenting experience. Expanding the background section with parenting literature might also give new ideas to strengthen the discussion section. For example, could more negative SWL perceptions be explained by the fact that older parents have often higher expectations or demands, at least for their parenting and for their parenting support.

The aims/objectives of the study are unclear and confusing. In the background section, a current version of the hypothesis is expressed using a complicated sentence, which is longer than six rows. Please consider rephrasing your aims without including the references. Clearer and more specific aims might also help to strengthen the rationale, to modify the structure of the manuscript (background, methods, results, discussion) and to proceed more logically.

Consider adding more reference to support the statement that the reliability and the validity of the SWL scale is well established. In addition, please consider describing the instruments/measure (explanatory variable, confounders) more thoroughly.

The results and discussion sections would benefit from restructuring. It is confusing that the first two chapters are not actual results. The second chapter of
the results includes variables that are not mentioned in the background or in the methods. Several covariates were used, but it is unclear what was actually the impact of these covariates in the analysis. In addition, the presence of the covariates does not come clear from the abstract or from the conclusions. Strengthening the rationale and clarifying the aims might also help restructuring the results and discussion sections. It would also be interesting to read more discussion about what do these results really mean in practise, and especially from the perspective parenting experience and parenting support.

Before the manuscript is published, also please consider editing the language and check the consistency of the use of the terms. For example, currently the same variables are referred to using the terms adverse pregnancy outcomes, confounders and independent factors.

To conclude, this topic and data are interesting and unique; however, please consider doing major revisions to strengthen the manuscript.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests