Reviewer’s report

Title: Characteristics of positive-interaction parenting style among primiparous teenage, optimal age, and advanced age mothers in Canada

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Reviewer: Thomas Schofield

Reviewer's report:

This manuscript addresses the association between maternal age and self-reported interaction style among a Canadian sample. The research question is interesting, and the following comments are intended to help the Authors shepherd this manuscript toward eventual publication.

The largest concern is the handling of age. Turning a continuous variable into a trichotomy results in a massive loss of information (Cohen, 1983. The costs of dichotomization). A more appropriate analysis would use maternal age as a continuous variable and correlate it with mother self-reported interaction style.

Right now, results like those reported in Table 2 are difficult to interpret, because it is unclear if the beta coefficients are *significantly different across the three groups*. The predictors of interaction style as a function of maternal age would more appropriately be tested using interaction terms. After centering maternal age and predictor "Q", multiply them together. Then regress interaction style onto maternal age, predictor Q, and the maternal age x predictor Q interaction term.

page 4, line 12: it would be more helpful to cite experimental work here, given the claim is that parenting *causally* affects child development. Off the top of my head, examples of such randomly-assigned interventions have been published by Phil and Carolyn Cowan at UC Berkeley, Richard Spoth at Iowa State University, and Nancy Gonzales at Arizona State University.

page 4, line 27: a third dimension of parenting often acknowledged is autonomy support. The fourfold typology is not measured in the current study, and is probably unhelpful. Instead, the authors could give specific examples (experimental or longitudinal) of the parenting dimension they assess in this study causing [or predicting change over time in] child development.
page 5, line 4: reference # 16 is good, but it may be more suitable to offer evidence drawn from
demographically similar samples to the one used in this study

page 5, line 11: "explained by" sounds too causal here. Please rephrase

page 5, line 31: "are know to provide" is an odd phrasing. Perhaps something like "Even after
accounting for [covariates], higher maternal age is positively associated with [self-reported?] warmth and sensitivity towards infants.

page 5, line 16: Probably worth mentioning that young mothers are also more likely to be single
parents (hardy, Shapiro, Astone et al., 1997)

page 5, line 36: "with no emphasis on advanced age mothers (35-years-old and older)" As any
child development textbook will show, this is simply not true. Instead of ignoring this literature,
perhaps the authors could cite it, acknowledge its limitations, and note how the current study
advanced the field.

page 6, line 48: "rare populations...were excluded from the study". Why collect a sample that
deliberately excludes certain segments, then build sampling weights in some effort to claim the
sample is "nationally representative"? It seems odd.

page 7, line 48: This is your DV yet I can barely tell what it's actually measuring. It's only 5
items, why not list them all?

page 8, line 7: Please clarify what "ever-landed immigrant status" means

page 8, line 7: Please clarify what "currently married/with partner" means. Does this mean the
mother is in a relationship, or does it mean that the romantic partner is living with them (i.e.,
cohabiting)?
It would be easier for the reader if these predictors were listed in the same order in which they are described below.

Why was data collection year included as a covariate? If the samples across the survey cycles were significantly different from each other, this is treating those differences as noise. What justification can the Authors present for that assumption?

Does "crude" mean zero-order or unconditional (i.e., without any other variables in the regression equation)? Please clarify.

Population weights are applied, but the reader doesn't know what these weights are purporting to accomplish. Given the limitations of the sampling frame described earlier, to what population are these weights going to generalize?

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

No

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

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