Reviewer's report

Title: Reading and writing difficulties in adolescence and risk of welfare dependence in 9,000 Norwegian adolescents: a ten year follow up of the Young-HUNT 1 study

Version: 3 Date: 27 June 2011

Reviewer: Sigrun Olafsdottir

Reviewer's report:

This is a revision of a paper looking at the relationship between reading and writing difficulties and risk of welfare dependence in Norway. Overall, the authors have addressed the comments raised by the previous reviews. However, there are few things that could be addressed to make the manuscript stronger.

Minor essential revisions

1. While the paper is overall well written, the transitions between paragraphs are relatively weak and the paper reads a little like a collection of paragraphs, rather than a coherent text that makes an overarching argument. It might be better to begin the background section with the second paragraph on reading and writing difficulties to set the stage for what the problem is and then make the link to the consequences and what the authors are ultimately interested in. The background could also spell out a little clearer what the overarching research question is and why it is important.

2. It is somewhat unclear what the population is and it would be useful to say what the county of Nord-Trondelag represents (that it is the fourth least populated county in Norway and excludes the largest Norwegian cities). I would also prefer that the authors stayed away from making generalizations to other European nations or would make the generalization a bit more carefully (which they do in the current version, compared to the previous), but it would be stronger to say something like, that this is likely to be a general relationship as we might expect that such difficulties have a relationship with future outcomes in other contexts, but needs to be tested.

3. The discussion of the Norwegian social insurance system and registration appears misplaced, and I wonder if it would make more sense to have it a part of the background section to give the reader an understanding of what the Norwegian context is like and what we should expect within that context. The discussion of measures could also be a little clearer, it might be enough to simply add dependent variable and independent variables to the heading of the sections to make it immediately clear to the reader.

4. The results could be written up more substantively and help the reader a little more to make sense of the data, what it means and how it relates to the key interests of the paper. The authors also find interesting gender differences, and it...
seems like some acknowledgement of gender could be made in the background section.

Overall, the paper has improved significantly and it appears like it could be stronger if the above issues were addressed.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests