Reviewer’s report

Title: Is the core-periphery labour market structure related to perceived health? Findings of the Northern Swedish Cohort

Version: 2 Date: 9 November 2011

Reviewer: Alfred Wagenaar

Reviewer’s report:

The revised manuscript has been improved a lot. The authors have dealt well with most of the concerns, which has also improved the readability of their manuscript. However, a few issues still need attention.

1. Measurement of peripheral employment. Thank you for the clarification regarding the calculation of the ‘exposure to peripheral employment’ measure. I agree with your statement that this measure can “be viewed as the average degree of peripheral employment across the entire 12-year period”. However, I think it is important to mention some shortcomings of this measure in the discussion section. For example, I think this measure is somewhat arbitrary in that it equals the duration of peripheral employment to the degree of exposure to peripheral employment. This means that, for example, a higher score can both reflect (1) a longer duration of less peripheral employment or (2) a shorter duration of more peripheral employment. Moreover, the measure does not take into account the time point at which someone had peripheral employment. I can imagine that these aspects may partly account for the findings in the current study as they make the ‘exposure to peripheral employment’ measure less accurate.

2. Psychological distress. After your clarification of the psychological distress measure for males and females, I noted that the cut-off points (for the worst quartile vs. the rest) are different for both genders. Therefore, it is questionable to what degree both genders can be compared with regard to psychological distress. Although both groups may be considered to be ‘relatively’ the same (i.e. worst quartile vs. the rest), in ‘absolute’ terms they are different. Moreover, for females this measure is also different in comparison with their psychological distress measure at age 16 and 21. Therefore, I would suggest mentioning this as a limitation in the discussion section.

3. Practical implications. As practical implications of the current study you mention that policy measures are needed. Can you give some examples of or suggestions for such policy measures, which can be taken in Sweden or in general?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests