PART 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal Name:</th>
<th>Asian Journal of Medicine and Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript Number:</td>
<td>Ms_AJMAH_33127</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title of the Manuscript:</td>
<td>Prevalence of Faecal Occult Blood in Primary School Children in Aba South Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of Article:</td>
<td>Original Research Article</td>
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PART 2:

Dear Editors and authors,

Thank you for sending this Ms for re-evaluation. There are a few remarks:

1. There is no conflict of interest statement in the Ms. May I ask, is the company that sells the test pushing for a sale? Very important.

2. When the 58 healthy students were found positive for occult blood, were there any further tests performed to investigate the reason for a positive test? What is the meaning of such results? At what cost are further tests required? How are they to be interpreted?

3. There is no statement in the Ms as what is the cost of one occult blood test, only to say that "...is simple and affordable" (line 189); what would be the cost translated to children in deworming programs?

4. As said before in the 2nd revision, "How can anybody recommend a test that has not been tried and evaluated first on thousands of individuals so as to obtain sound interpretation of results?"

5. Two publications are suggested reading, on tropical enteropathy. Their perusal saves me an explanation; however, I would like to add that an occult blood test in "healthy" school-age children does not lead anywhere.


2 citation. "A spectrum of enteropathies, characterized by small intestinal inflammation, reduced absorptive capacity, and increased intestinal permeability, commonly affect people..."
in developing countries. This subclinical intestinal pathology facilitates microbial translocation across the compromised intestinal barrier, leading to chronic systemic inflammation that may adversely impact health. Environmental enteropathy (EE), ubiquitous among people living in unhygienic conditions, likely mediates two interlinked public health problems of childhood, stunting and anemia."


6. Nowhere in those references is the recommendation for occult blood testing; however, that is not the point. The point is that inespecific, inflammatory enteropathies may present with positive occult blood in some instances. Therefore, I repeat: thousands of tests have to be performed and interpreted before one can recommend this test at libidum.

7. Finally, I cannot in good conscience recommend this Ms for publication, specially not in its conclusion; I do not see why, for what reason should occult blood testing be included in deworming programs, when the results do not tell us anything meaningful and only may add to the confusion or mismanagement of patients – for no obvious reason - that is common in developing countries.