

Abnormal Citations to the Editor-in-Chief of "The International Journal of Tourism Research"

Recently, the 5GH Team received a tip-off alleging that Timothy Jeonglyeol LEE (李鼎烈) from the Macau University of Science and Technology may be exploiting his position as the Editor-in-Chief of "The International Journal of Tourism Research" (IJTR) to inflate his citations. Here are some more detailed data [1]:

According to a webpage [2] from the Macau University of Science and Technology, LEE was appointed as the IJTR Editor-in-Chief in May, 2023.

Pre-Appointment Data

In 2022, there were 65 articles issued on IJTR, only 6 articles (about 9%), including 3 articles coauthored by LEE, cited at least one of the LEE's publications. Excluding the co-authored papers, the remaining 3 articles each cited only one of LEE's publications. In total, LEE received 22 citations from IJTR in 2022, 19 of which were self-citations.

Post-Appointment Data

Following Lee's appointment as EiC, citations of his work in IJTR articles increased markedly. In 2024, a total of 195 articles were issued on IJTR, 133 of them cited at least one publication by LEE, accumulating 464 citations in total. This figure accounts for 28% of all citations LEE received in 2024. Notably, 42 of the 195 articles (about 22%) cited 5 or more publications by LEE.

Although citations of Lee's work in IJTR articles decreased in 2025, the figure remained several times higher than pre-appointment levels. In 2025, IJTR issued 174 articles, 72 of them (41%) cited at least one of LEE's publication, 24 of them (14%, 24/174) cited 5 or more.

These anomalous citation patterns involving the journal's Editor-in-Chief strongly suggest potential citation manipulation.

[1] Supporting Information (/Report/2026/000012.R4.xlsx)

[2] <https://fhtm.must.edu.mo/id-1718/article/view/id-2335.html> [in Chinese]

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