

## **ABSTRACT**

The world's largest and fastest growing tourism industry is also a major source of income for large number of countries, including Sri Lanka. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is considered to be the worst pandemic of the century, many countries around the world, have to face major social, economic and health problems. To control the spread of the virus, many countries have begun implementing health care policies recommended by the World Health Organization, including lockdown and imposing travel restrictions. as an industry related to the human movements Tourism Industry suffered a severe setback with COVID-19 pandemic. Adventure tourism is an engagement rather than passive experience and it is a niche market in the tourism industry that contributes greatly to the Sri Lankan economy. There are thousands of people contributing to this adventure tourism sector by providing various types of services. while selecting Kithulgala as a research conducting area, this study aimed at identifying the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Kithulgala adventure tourism sector service providers and develop resilience and survival strategies under new normal condition. semi-structured interview method used to collect primary data and target population was the Kithulgala tourism sector service providers. Sample consist of 15 respondents including various service providers who are existing in Kithulgala and convenient sampling technique was used to select the sample in qualitative approach. Data are analyzed using content analysis method. The findings of the study revealed about the Social, physical, financial and policy impacts as the impacts of COVID-19 and government support, safety measures and team collaboration as the resilience and survival strategies according to respondents. Moreover, the study recommends to increase the government involvement to develop infrastructure facilities and promotion activities, in addition to the tourism industry, introduce other sources of income, introduce vocational training opportunities, introduce to an insurance scheme that can cover the damage to their business in such an emergency situation and organize risk reduction and emergency protocols awareness programs.

**Key words:** Tourism industry, COVID-19 pandemic, Adventure Tourism, service provider, Kithulgala