INTRODUCTION

Although psychiatric illnesses comprise 11.8% of the overall disease burden in India, only 10% of these receive evidence-based interventions. Stigma, mistrust in allopathic medicine, allegiance towards faith-healers, cultural and traditional practices and beliefs are some of the major hindrances towards the treatment of mentally ill patients.

AIM

To assess supernatural attitude towards mental health among tribal and non-tribal populations.
METHODOLOGY

Cross-sectional study conducted in two tertiary care centers, on 50 tribal and 50 non-tribal people by purposive sampling, after their consent.

Tools used for the study:

• Self-designed sociodemographic proforma

• The supernatural attitude questionnaire (SAQ): a 19-item scale with yes/no responses to assess magico-religious influences on mental illnesses and their treatment.

• Attitudes Toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale-Short Form (ATSPPH-SF): A 10-item questionnaire for assessment of mental health treatment attitudes, using likert scale ranging from 0-3.

Statistical analysis: The collected data was analyzed using SPSS-16.0(IBM, Atlanta, USA) with parametric and non parametric tests used as appropriate.
RESULT
• No significant difference between tribal and non-tribal populations in sociodemographic findings
• The score of SAQ in tribal was significantly higher in tribal populations
• The score of ATSPPH-SF showed no difference in both populations

DISCUSSION
• Significantly higher supernatural attitude was found in tribal populations, which has to do with their socio-cultural beliefs and practices.
• Tribals approach treatment of their health conditions in the traditional manner, approaching healers, herbalists and dais for cure.
• However, when it comes to approaching treatment of mental illnesses, they rely equally on natural and psychosomatic lines of management.

CONCLUSION
Even through the tribal populations of India hold a supernatural regard towards mental illnesses as compared to the non-tribal populations, their treatment-seeking attitude remains unaffected.