

1 **Screening of genotypes for drought tolerance using PEG 6000 in different landraces of**  
2 **Rice (*Oryza sativa* L.)**

3 **Abstract**

4 Drought stress restricts crop productivity in the face of climate change. The loss of  
5 water resources for food production is a global concern as the world's population continues to  
6 expand. Drought-tolerant cultivars must be developed to assure food and nutritional security.  
7 The drought response of rice landraces is poorly understood.  
8 Rice genotypes Sengalpattu sirumani, Mappillai sambha, N22, and IR64 were used to  
9 standardize drought stress using polyethylene glycol (PEG 6000). The PEG 6000  
10 concentration which caused 50% mortality in the experiment was -0.8 MPa and this was used  
11 to impose drought stress to evaluate the total set of rice genotypes in the laboratory of the  
12 Department of Crop Physiology, Adhiparasakthi Agricultural College. The experiments were  
13 carried out by a factorial randomized complete block design in five replications. Germination  
14 percentage, shoot length, root length, vigor index, chlorophyll content, and proline content were  
15 used to screen and select the rice landraces. The rice landraces Sengalpattu sirumani, Poongar,  
16 Karuppukavuni, and Iluppaipoo sambha recorded higher germination percentages under drought  
17 stress conditions. It was observed from the physiological and biochemical parameters in the  
18 present study that the landraces Sengalpattu sirumani, Poongar, Karuppukavuni, and Iluppaipoo  
19 sambha withstood drought stress at the seedling stage. Furthermore, These four rice landraces  
20 could be used as donor parents in the breeding program to develop drought-tolerant rice  
21 varieties.

22 **Key words:** Drought Screening, PEG, Rice landraces

23 **Introduction:**

24 Rice (*Oryza sativa* L.) is the most significant food crop on the planet, particularly in  
25 Asia. Rice and wheat were grown in 124 and 126 countries, respectively, in 2013, with global  
26 production totaling 745 and 713 million tons [1]. Asia has 90 percent of the world's rice area  
27 and produces 92 percent of the world's rice. India is the most important rice-growing country  
28 in Asia, accounting for 23.3 percent of gross cultivated land and 43 percent of total food grain  
29 production, and 46 percent of overall cereal production [2]. After sugarcane and maize, rice is  
30 the third most widely produced agricultural commodity on the planet XX [1]. Rice is a good  
31 source of thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, and dietary fiber, and contributes 20% of the world's  
32 dietary energy and 13% of per capita protein [3]. Asia consumes 90% of the world's rice, and

33 the region's total rice demand continues to climb. Rice consumption per capita continues to  
34 rise outside of Asia, where it is not a staple diet. The ever-increasing human population,  
35 together with the loss of agricultural land owing to urbanization processes and reduced water  
36 availability due to climate change, pose major problems to global agriculture [4]. To meet the  
37 estimated population needs by 2050, large increases in grain yields of main crop species such  
38 as rice, wheat, and maize are necessary [5].

39 Rice production accounts for more than 40% of total food grain production in India.  
40 Rice output was predicted to be at 104.8 million tonnes in 2019-20, a decrease of  
41 1.85 million tonnes from the previous year. New tactics must be devised in the framework of  
42 achieving food security, regardless of the harsh climate conditions predicted for the near  
43 future. Drought is one of the most obvious factors that limit rice output in South India's  
44 vulnerable areas. Existing current rice varieties do not fare well in drought-stricken situations.  
45 India is home to a diverse range of rice cultivars, landraces, and lesser-known types that have  
46 been cultivated by farmers and local entrepreneurs for centuries. However, the current  
47 climate change events are posing a significant barrier to increased rice productivity. Over the  
48 past three decades, the overall yield variability due to climate change was 53% of the total  
49 rice harvest. [6].

50 Drought or flood stress, nutrient deficiency, excess salt, osmotic stress, high or low-  
51 temperature stress, metal toxicity, and excessive light stress are some of the abiotic problems  
52 that plants confront. Drought stress is perhaps the most important of all the stresses to which  
53 plants are subjected for reduced yield, both in natural and agricultural settings [7]. Areas  
54 under drought have already expanded and this is expected to increase further with the advent  
55 of climate change.

56 Rice is grown in a variety of environments, including irrigated, rainfed upland,  
57 rainfed lowland, and deep water. Around 50% of rice-growing land is irrigated, with rainfed  
58 lowlands accounting for 34% of total rice planted area, rainfed uplands for 9%, and flooded  
59 systems accounting for 7%. Irrigated rice alone accounts for 75% of global rice output [8].  
60 Rice is ranked top among the most irrigated crops in the world since it requires more water to  
61 grow [9]. Rice is suited to a wide range of settings, although its semi-aquatic nature makes  
62 paddy production more efficient at high soil moisture levels. In India, there are 22.0, 14.4,  
63 and 6.3 million ha of irrigated, rainfed lowland, and highland rice, respectively (Singh, 2009).  
64 About 6.3 million ha of the upland area and 7.3 million ha of lowland region are very  
65 drought-prone out of the total 20.7 million ha of rainfed rice area reported in India [10].

66 Droughts have apparent yield impacts, especially if they occur during critical times of  
67 the rice growth cycle when plant development is highly sensitive to water requirements.  
68 Similarly, drought scans limit the amount of land that can be cultivated, as in the case of  
69 delayed monsoon. There are various landraces accessible in Tamil Nadu, some of which are  
70 particularly resilient to environmental conditions such as drought and heat, and are  
71 traditionally used by the people in that area. Although the yielding capacity of traditional  
72 varieties is limited this is compensated by other appreciable characteristics such as high  
73 nutritional value, good cooking qualities including pleasurable aroma, and sufficient volume  
74 of a cooked meal with less quantity of raw rice. On-farm and in-market management  
75 responsiveness of landraces and high-yielding traditional varieties area about 30–35% more  
76 than modern varieties. The seed of traditional varieties costs 2.5 times lesser than that of  
77 modern varieties.

78 As a result, improving the history of traditional rice varieties and landraces could  
79 serve as a platform for future study, particularly in agricultural disciplines, resulting in  
80 validated outcomes for future food demands. These rice landraces need to be identified before  
81 they become extinct. Knowing about their existence and significance through ancient  
82 literature may pave the path for a successful collection and characterization of these  
83 traditional rice genotypes. There is a future need to expand the genetic base of the rice crop  
84 by introgressing genes from diverse sources. As a result, there is a pressing need to collect,  
85 use, and analyze untapped germplasm. Hence, we aim to select the drought tolerant plant by  
86 various factors viz., morphological, biochemical, and physiological.

### 87 **Materials and methods**

88 The present investigation was carried out during 2021-2022 under laboratory  
89 conditions. The experiment was conducted at the Department of Crop Physiology,  
90 Adhiparasakthi Agricultural College, Kalavai, Ranipet. A brief account of the materials used  
91 and methodologies followed in the experiment conducted to achieve the objectives of the  
92 study are given below.

93 Seed of rice varieties (Table 1) collected from Department of Rice, Paddy Breeding  
94 Station, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore-3 were used for this study.

95 **Table 1. Detail of studied genotypes with their origin and special character**

Sl. No.	Variety	Origin	Specific note
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1	Athur kichilisambha	Athur, Tamil Nadu.	Low glycemic index, medicinal benefits, enhance muscles.
2	Illupai poo sambha	Tamilnadu	Resistant to water stress
3	Karuppukavani	Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu.	Rich in anti-oxidant, nonlodging.
4	Kitchidi sambha	Tamil Nadu	Suitable for dry sowing, pest, and disease- resistant.
5	kullakar	Tamil Nadu	Resistant to drought, pests, and disease, resistant to alkaline, saline soil, and water- logged areas.
6	Mappilai sambha	Thiruvanamalai, Tamil Nadu.	Medicinal benefits (use in mouth ulcers, improves digestion).
7	Poongar	Ranganadhapuram, Tamil Nadu.	Resistant to drought, tall variety.
8	Sengalpattu sirumani	Sengalpattu, TamilNadu	High yield, resistant to waterlogging, suitable for a south Indian meal.
9	Thanga sambha	Kanchipuram, TamilNadu	Very long matured grains look like gold, fine grains, and long earhead.
10	N 22	Eastern India	The short duration of maturity (80-95 days), deep-rooted, drought and heat tolerant as rice cultivar
11	IR 64	IRRI, Philippines	Maturity duration (115 days), hybrid variety with high yield, rainfed lowland areas, semi-dwarf, susceptible to abiotic stress.

96

### 97 **Standardization of drought stress using Polyethylene glycol (PEG 6000)**

98 Polyethylene glycol (PEG 6000) is an inert, water-binding polymer, which accurately  
99 mimics drought stress under dry soil conditions [11].

100 The prerequisite for screening the rice genotypes using PEG is the standardization of the  
101 optimum concentration of PEG. PEG is known to reduce the water potential and induce plant  
102 water deficits, causing physiological disorders and resulting in less water uptake and the loss  
103 of cell turgor.

104 Rice genotypes Sengalpattu sirumani, Iluppaipoo sambha, N22 and IR64 were used to  
105 standardize drought stress using polyethylene glycol (PEG 6000). Healthy seeds of uniform  
106 size were surface sterilized with 0.1% Mercuric chloride (HgCl<sub>2</sub>) for 2-3 min and then  
107 washed thoroughly with distilled water. Twenty-five sterilized seeds were sown in a rolled paper  
108 towel with various water potentials viz., 0.0 (control), -0.4, -0.5, -0.7, and -0.8 MPa of PEG 6000,  
109 and five replications were maintained for each treatment.

110 Number of seeds germinated was counted every alternate days from day-2 to day-15  
111 after sowing to determine the germination percentage. Seedling growth parameters such as  
112 shoot length and root length were recorded on the 15<sup>th</sup> day after sowing in randomly selected  
113 seedlings. Root length stress index (RLSI) and Seed vigor (SV) were measured using the  
114 following formula.

115  $RLSI (\%) = [\text{Root length of stressed plant} / \text{Root length of control plants}] \times 100$

116  $SV (\%) = \text{Germination percentage} \times \text{Seedling length.}$

### 117 **Screening of rice genotypes for drought stress tolerance at seedling stage**

118 The PEG 6000 concentration which caused 50% mortality in the previous experiment  
119 was -0.8 MPa and the same was used to impose the drought stress to evaluate the total set of  
120 rice genotypes. Uniform-sized seeds of each rice genotype were selected and disinfected with  
121 0.1% mercuric chloride (HgCl<sub>2</sub>) for 5 min and then thoroughly washed with distilled water  
122 three times. Fifteen seeds of each cultivar were placed in a rolled paper towel and transferred  
123 to an incubator with a photoperiod of 12 h light and 12 h dark with a daily maximum  
124 photosynthetic photon flux density (PPFD) of  $380 \pm 40 \mu\text{mol}/(\text{m}^2 \cdot \text{s})$  at 25 °C in the laboratory  
125 of Department of Crop Physiology, Adhiparasakthi Agricultural College, Kalavai, Ranipet  
126 (12.55° N, 79.24° E). The experiments were carried out by a factorial randomized complete  
127 block design in five replications.

### 128 **Germination percentage**

129 Twenty-five seeds of each rice cultivar were placed in a roll paper towel and the  
130 germinability was recorded on the fourteenth day after placing. The number of seeds  
131 germinated out of 25 was expressed as a percent.

### 132 **Shoot length**

133 The shoot length of the seedlings was measured from five randomly selected  
134 seedlings in each variety from each replication on the fourteenth day after sowing and the  
135 mean was calculated and expressed in cm.

### 136 **Root length**

137 The root length of the seedlings was measured from five randomly selected seedlings  
138 in each variety from each replication on the fourteenth day after sowing and the mean was  
139 calculated and expressed in cm.

140 **Vigour index**

141 Vigour index of the seedlings was worked out by using the following formula.

142 Vigour index = Germination percentage x (Root length (cm) + Shoot length (cm)).

143 **Chlorophyll content**

144 Chlorophyll content in leaves was estimated by using the method described by [12]  
145 and expressed in mg g<sup>-1</sup> fresh weight.

146 **Proline content**

147 Proline accumulation in the leaf was estimated by the method of [13]. The proline  
148 content was expressed in mg g<sup>-1</sup> fresh weight.

149 **Statistical Analysis**

150 The experimental design for the laboratory experiment was factorial with a completely  
151 randomized design (FCRD) replicated five times for each of the standardization and screening  
152 experiments. The data were statistically analyzed as suggested by Gomez and Gomez (1984).  
153 Wherever statistical significance was observed, the critical difference (CD) at 0.05 level of  
154 probability was used for mean comparison.

155 **Results and Discussion**

156 **Drought stress at seedling stage in rice genotypes**

157 Drought stress is a major stumbling block for crop development and growth. Drought  
158 stress has the principal consequence of reducing plant development  
159 [14]. PEG 6000 was used to test rice genotypes for drought stress. Seed germination is inhibited  
160 or seedling growth and development are suppressed when the water potential is low during  
161 germination [15]. Due to osmotic stress, the germination percentage decreases as the dose of  
162 water potential is raised. With an increasing dose of water potential, injured cellular organelles  
163 result in a lower germination percentage [16]. In rice treated with polyethylene glycol, [17] found  
164 that germination percentage reduced as the amount of water potential rose.

165 Shoot length normally decreased with an increased amount of water potential in all  
166 the genotypes, but some genotypes (Sengalpattu sirumani, Iluppaipoo sambha, Poongar,  
167 Karuppukavuni) exhibited a reduced reduction of shoot length at higher water potential and  
168 some genotypes reported a higher reduction of shoot length even at lower potential. Seedling  
169 shoot length increased and reduced with increased water potential, according to [17], and it  
170 mostly varied dependent on the genotype-specific effect. Shoot length is reduced due to stress

171 generated during water stress, while shoot length is increased due to growth stimulation  
172 during stress conditions [18].

173 Root length was found to decrease as water potential was increased; however, the  
174 reduction in root length varied among genotypes; some rice genotypes are highly sensitive  
175 and have a large reduction in root length at low water potential, while others tolerate it and  
176 have a small reduction in root length even at high water potential.  
177 Root length reduction was found to be positively related to water potential, according to [19].  
178 With increased water potential, cell division and elongation are likely to be disrupted,  
179 resulting in a reduction in root length [19].

180 Seed vigour is adversely associated with water potential, and acute osmotic stress that  
181 occurred during treatment had a negative impact on seed vigour. Seed vigour is reduced with  
182 increased water potential in rice, according to [20], who used a PEG concentration of 5- 20%.  
183 Seed vigour is reduced as a result of the osmotic stress caused by PEG treatment, which causes a  
184 reduction in cellular activity [21].

185 The root length stress index was shown to be positively linked with the degree of  
186 water potential. [20] found that increasing the PEG concentration level raised the root length  
187 stress index, which was similar to our findings. Because of the significant stress put on the  
188 root during osmotic stress, the root length stress index rose [22].

189 The present study indicates that drought stress at the seedling stage affects the  
190 germination rate, root length, shoot length, seed vigour, and RLSI of rice.  
191 The variation in germination and seedling growth characteristics was specific for genotypes  
192 under reduced water potential [23]. The difference in germination rate and growth  
193 characteristics of genotypes under moisture stress conditions would be helpful to identify the  
194 drought-tolerant genotype [24, 15].

195 Among the 11 genotypes landraces Sengalpattu sirumani, Iluppaiipo sambha,  
196 Poongar, and Karuppukavuni w showed higher germination percentage, root length, shoot  
197 length, seed vigour, and Root length Stress Index (RLSI) than the other genotypes under  
198 seedling stage drought condition.

### 199 **Effect of seedling Stage Drought on Biochemical Parameters**

200 Chlorophyll is one of the most important components for photosynthesis in the  
201 chloroplast [25]. The Photosynthetic pigment and total chlorophyll content were analyzed and  
202 found that there was an increase of chlorophyll content from the vegetative to the

203 reproductive stage but rapidly declined thereafter due to water stress-induced degradation.  
204 The chlorophyll content of the plant tissue represents the photosynthetic capacity of the plant.  
205 Among the rice landraces, Sengalpattu sirumani recorded the lowest reduction in chlorophyll  
206 content due to drought over its control (16.94 %) followed by Poongar (23.53 %) and  
207 Karuppukavuni (29.32 %) under seedling stage drought condition.

208 Sengalpattu sirumani registered higher total chlorophyll content under drought  
209 ( $3.83 \text{ mg g}^{-1}$ ) compared to other rice genotypes. Drought-induced chlorophyll loss is mostly  
210 due to damage to chloroplasts caused by active oxygen species [26], which are formed more  
211 often under abiotic stress conditions. The increased activity of the chlorophyll degrading  
212 enzyme chlorophyllase may also contribute to the decrease in chlorophyll content during  
213 drought stress. Chlorophyllase and peroxidase enzymes increased in response to extreme  
214 drought stress, lowering chlorophyll concentration [27]. Furthermore, the decline in chlorophyll  
215 content during drought stress is influenced by the length and intensity of the drought [28].  
216 Drought-induced chlorophyll depletion has long been thought to be a sign of pigment  
217 photooxidation and chlorophyll degradation. This was in corroboration with the results of the  
218 present study that recorded higher total chlorophyll content in landrace Sengalpattu sirumani.  
219 During water stress, [29] discovered that mesophyll cells were the primary cause of  
220 chlorophyll loss. When the chloroplast membrane was strained, it lost its intensity [30].  
221 Drought stress caused structural changes in the chloroplast, such as excessive swelling,  
222 lamellae distortion, vesiculation, and the development of lipid droplets, which all led to  
223 structural and functional changes in the chloroplast [31].

224 **Proline**, a heterocyclic amino acid, accumulated under drought stress conditions due  
225 to hydrolysis of protein [32]. Proline is believed to protect plant tissues against stress by  
226 acting as nitrogen storage, an osmoregulator, and a protectant for enzymes and cellular  
227 structure. Analysis of proline content revealed that there was an increase due to the water  
228 stress observed in all the genotypes and a significant difference was observed across all the  
229 genotypes used in the present study. Irrespective of the genotypes, the mean increase in  
230 proline content was 58.20 %. The accumulation of proline could have provided the plants  
231 with an osmotic mechanism to maintain a favorable water potential gradient for water entry  
232 through the roots [33]. [34] reported that proline was synthesized to depress the internal  
233 osmotic potential to maintain a positive gradient for water uptake under water stress  
234 conditions. The enormous increase in proline content was encountered as the stress advanced.  
235 Among the genotypes, Sengalpattu sirumani recorded the highest proline content of 11.56 mg

236 g<sup>-1</sup> in the reproductive stages. Drought-induced proline accumulation has been observed in  
237 many plant species, namely rice, maize, and finger millet and has been associated with  
238 adaptation to drought stress [35].

239 Many authors have observed proline increases in various plant species as a result of  
240 dehydration. Proline build-up has always been accompanied by a decrease in tissue water  
241 potential throughout time, according to all known evidence [37]. This was supported by other  
242 findings in the current investigation. [38], found that proline build-up was significant at  
243 panicle emergence in genotypes with a high susceptibility to water stress in sorghum.  
244 Drought-resistant genotypes, on the other hand, collected more proline at maturity than  
245 drought-tolerant genotypes. In the current investigation, a similar pattern was seen.

## 246 **Conclusion**

247 Drought tolerance is a complex trait, which is a combined function of various  
248 morphological, biochemical, and molecular traits which ultimately contribute to higher  
249 tolerance under drought conditions. Selection for drought tolerance can be performed by  
250 measuring yield under stress conditions and/or measuring secondary traits such as  
251 morphological, physiological, and biochemical parameters correlated with yield under stress  
252 conditions. A better understanding of the physiological basis of yield under drought will  
253 probably help in screening large germplasm for drought tolerance.

254 The present study was conducted using a set of 11 rice genotypes to investigate the  
255 physiological and molecular responses of rice genotypes to drought stress during the seedling  
256 stage to identify the drought-tolerant rice landraces.

257 The conclusions from the present study are summarized below.

- 258 • The most significant finding from this research is the identification of tolerant  
259 landraces of rice viz., Sengalpattu sirumani, Poongar, Karuppukavuni, Iluppaipoo  
260 sambha which performed better under drought stress from the pool of 11 rice  
261 genotypes which includes 9 traditional landraces and two check varieties.
- 262 • In the laboratory experiment, the level of osmotic stress was standardized using PEG  
263 6000 and found that 50% mortality was observed at -0.8 MPa and the rice genotypes  
264 were screened for drought tolerance using various germination-associated traits. The  
265 rice landraces Sengalpattu sirumani, Poongar, Karuppukavuni, and Iluppaipoo

266 sambha recorded higher germination percentage, seedling length, seed vigor, and root  
267 length stress index.

268 • The physiological traits, such as chlorophyll content and proline content were  
269 significantly higher in Sengalpattu sirumani, Poongar, Karuppukavuni, and  
270 Iluppaipoo sambha whereas it was lower in Mappillai sambha compared to the  
271 tolerant check (N22).

272 It was observed that the rice landraces Sengalpattu sirumani, Poongar,  
273 Karuppukavuni, and Iluppaipoo sambha could withstand drought stress during the seedling  
274 stage and under stressful situations.

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380 **Table 2. Germination percentage (%) of different rice genotypes under control and – 0.8**  
381 **MPa PEG 6000**

Genotypes	Germination percentage (%)			
	Control	- 0.5 Mpa	- 0.7 Mpa	- 0.8 Mpa
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	100	71.80	60.11	60.00
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	100	82.54	79.24	65.00

<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	100	86.12	80.23	66.00
<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	100	67.45	53.12	55.00
<b>Kullakar</b>	100	80.14	75.69	63.00
<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	100	55.03	46.21	35.50
<b>Poongkar</b>	100	87.45	82.12	68.00
<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	100	90.20	88.26	72.00
<b>Thangasambha</b>	100	69.15	54.24	59.00
<b>N 22</b>	100	71.15	59.41	48.41
<b>IR 64</b>	100	58.46	47.15	40.45
<b>Mean</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>74.49</b>	<b>65.95</b>	<b>57.48</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>GxT</b>	
<b>SEd</b>	1.67	1.89	3.25	
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	3.22	3.67	7.65	

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388 **Table 3. Root length (cm) of different rice genotypes under control and – 0.8 MPa PEG**389 **6000**

<b>Genotypes</b>	<b>Root length (cm)</b>			
	<b>Control</b>	<b>- 0.5 Mpa</b>	<b>- 0.7 Mpa</b>	<b>- 0.8 Mpa</b>
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	22.50	21.08	19.97	17.51
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	26.28	24.78	23.67	23.38
<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	27.12	25.68	24.57	23.52

<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	17.34	15.88	14.77	15.39
<b>Kullakar</b>	23.22	21.78	20.67	16.12
<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	16.50	15.08	13.97	13.43
<b>Poongkar</b>	29.00	27.58	26.47	24.90
<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	29.41	27.98	26.87	25.40
<b>Thangasambha</b>	18.60	17.18	16.07	16.21
<b>N 22</b>	23.56	20.01	18.25	16.85
<b>IR 64</b>	22.56	17.85	15.95	15.87
<b>Mean</b>	<b>23.27</b>	<b>21.35</b>	<b>21.92</b>	<b>18.93</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>GxT</b>	
<b>SEd</b>	0.45	0.54	1.03	
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	1.00	1.08	2.31	

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396 **Table 4. Shoot length (cm) of different rice genotypes under control and – 0.8 MPa**397 **PEG 6000**

<b>Genotypes</b>	<b>Shoot length (cm)</b>			
	<b>Control</b>	<b>- 0.5 Mpa</b>	<b>- 0.7 Mpa</b>	<b>- 0.8 Mpa</b>
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	16.00	15.49	14.90	10.35
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	16.20	15.69	15.35	12.35
<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	16.90	16.39	16.05	12.85
<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	15.60	15.09	14.50	9.80

<b>Kullakar</b>	16.15	15.64	15.05	11.65
<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	15.00	14.49	13.90	8.50
<b>Poongkar</b>	17.10	16.59	16.25	14.25
<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	18.12	17.59	17.25	15.25
<b>Thangasambha</b>	15.60	15.09	14.50	10.20
<b>N 22</b>	13.56	12.45	10.45	8.90
<b>IR 64</b>	13.45	10.98	10.75	9.30
<b>Mean</b>	<b>15.69</b>	<b>15.04</b>	<b>14.45</b>	<b>10.44</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>GxT</b>	
<b>SEd</b>	0.23	2.28	0.57	
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	0.54	0.59	1.08	

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405 **Table 5. Seedling length (cm) of different rice genotypes under control and – 0.8 MPa**

406 **PEG 6000**

<b>Genotypes</b>	<b>Seedling length (cm)</b>			
	<b>Control</b>	<b>- 0.5 Mpa</b>	<b>- 0.7 Mpa</b>	<b>- 0.8 Mpa</b>
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	38.50	36.57	34.87	26.55
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	42.40	40.47	39.02	35.65
<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	44.00	42.07	40.62	36.35
<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	32.90	30.97	29.27	25.10

<b>Kullakar</b>	39.35	37.42	35.72	29.15
<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	31.50	29.57	27.87	21.90
<b>Poongkar</b>	46.10	44.17	42.72	39.15
<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	47.52	45.57	44.12	40.65
<b>Thangasambha</b>	34.20	32.27	30.57	26.30
<b>N 22</b>	37.12	32.46	28.70	27.15
<b>IR 64</b>	36.01	28.83	26.70	25.17
<b>Mean</b>	<b>39.04</b>	<b>36.40</b>	<b>34.56</b>	<b>30.28</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>GxT</b>	
<b>SEd</b>	0.45	0.54	1.03	
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	1.00	1.08	2.31	

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413 **Table 6. Seed vigour of different rice genotypes under control and – 0.8 MPa PEG**414 **6000**

<b>Genotypes</b>	<b>Seed vigour</b>	
	<b>Control</b>	<b>- 0.8 Mpa</b>
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	3845	663
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	3992	319
<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	4255	547
<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	3744	585
<b>Kullakar</b>	3892	531

<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	3619	648
<b>Pongkar</b>	4275	1983
<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	4560	2297
<b>Thangasambha</b>	3780	411
<b>N 22</b>	3572	621
<b>IR 64</b>	3448	448
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3907</b>	<b>823</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>SEd</b>	49.02	10.96
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	96.90	21.67
		<b>GxT</b>
		69.32
		137.04

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421 **Table 7. Total chlorophyll content (mg g<sup>-1</sup>) of different rice genotypes under control and**  
 422 **- 0.8 MPa PEG 6000**

<b>Genotypes</b>	<b>Total chlorophyll content (mg g<sup>-1</sup>)</b>	
	<b>Control</b>	<b>- 0.8 Mpa</b>
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	2.65	1.93
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	2.79	2.04
<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	2.87	2.11
<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	2.54	1.74
<b>Kullakar</b>	2.76	1.94
<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	2.54	1.51

<b>Poongkar</b>	3.00	2.27
<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	3.01	3.83
<b>Thangasambha</b>	2.61	2.50
<b>N 22</b>	2.76	1.94
<b>IR 64</b>	2.50	1.29
<b>Mean</b>	<b>2.73</b>	<b>2.09</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>SEd</b>	0.06	0.01
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	0.11	0.03
		<b>GxT</b>
		0.08
		0.16

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429 **Table 8. Proline (mg g<sup>-1</sup>) content of different rice genotypes under control and – 0.8**  
 430 **MPa PEG 6000**

<b>Genotypes</b>	<b>Proline (mg g<sup>-1</sup>) content</b>	
	<b>Control</b>	<b>- 0.8 Mpa</b>
<b>Athurkichilisambha</b>	11.31	8.81
<b>Iluppai poo sambha</b>	11.51	10.81
<b>Karuppukavuni</b>	12.02	10.80
<b>Kitchidisambha</b>	10.64	7.79
<b>Kullakar</b>	11.35	9.16
<b>Mappilaisambha</b>	10.61	7.54
<b>Poongkar</b>	12.40	11.09

<b>Sengalpattusirumani</b>	12.64		11.56
<b>Thangasambha</b>	10.94		8.77
<b>N 22</b>	10.61		8.77
<b>IR 64</b>	11.35		7.79
<b>Mean</b>	<b>11.39</b>		<b>8.37</b>
	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>GxT</b>
<b>SEd</b>	0.29	0.07	0.42
<b>CD (0.05)</b>	0.58	0.13	0.82

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UNDER PEER REVIEW