

## MODELS TO ESTIMATE INCIDENT SOLAR RADIATION ON SEROPÉDICA, RIO DE JANEIRO

### MODELOS DE ESTIMATIVA DA RADIAÇÃO SOLAR INCIDENTE EM SEROPÉDICA, RIO DE JANEIRO

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**ABSTRACT:** Incident solar radiation ( $R_s$ ) is usually used as an input variable in growth simulation models and yield of agricultural crops, in the design of alternative energy systems, buildings desing, weather, irrigation projects and food preservation, among others. However, in Brazil, there are few studies that evaluated the performance of different models in estimating  $R_s$ . Therefore, the aim of the study is to evaluate the Hargreaves-Samani, Thornton-Running and Weiss models to estimate  $R_s$  in the municipality of Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro. We used hourly measurements of solar radiation ( $R_s$ ,  $\text{KJ m}^{-2}$ ) and maximum ( $t_x$ , °C) and minimum ( $t_n$ , °C) air temperature obtained from Ecologia Agrícola station (EA), between January/2008 to December/2013. Normality (Shapiro-Wilks and Jarque-Bera) and homogeneity of variance (Bartlett) tests were applied to the data set. The performance of the models was evaluated based on different statistical parameters ( $r^2$  RMSE,  $d$ ,  $\rho_s$  and Student's t-test). The results indicated the rejection of the variance normality hypothesis of the standardized residuals by Shapiro-Wilks and Jarque-Bera tests. Bartlett's test indicated the presence of heterogeneity of model estimates. Hargreaves-Samani and Thornton-Running models obtained high values for  $r^2$  and low values for  $d$ . Hargreaves-Samani (coastal) model excelled in relation to other, being more suitable for estimating the  $R_s$  in the municipality of Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro.

**KEYWORDS:** Empirical models. Extreme air temperature. Baixada fluminense.

## INTRODUCTION

Solar radiation is the main source of energy for many physical, chemical and biological processes occurring in the Earth system, and provide energy for atmospheric movements and, thus, determine weather and climate spatiotemporal patterns (CASTELLVÍ, 2008; JERSZURKI; SOUZA, 2013). It is directly responsible for air and soil heating (sensible heat flux), photosynthesis and evapotranspiration (latent heat flux), all direct impact on human activities (CARVALHO et al., 2011) and, currently, has been used as alternate energy source.

Incident solar radiation ( $R_s$ ) is usually used as an input variable in growth simulation models and productivity of agricultural crops, design of alternative energy systems, buildings desing, weather, climate change scenarios, irrigation and food preservation projects, among others (ALMOROX et al., 2008; DANTAS et al., 2003; TOVAR-PESCADOR et al., 2006; DELGADO et al., 2014).

Knowledge of  $R_s$  is also essential in many reference evapotranspiration (ET) estimate models (Penman-Monteith e Priestley-Taylor) (ALLEN, 1996; FIETZ et al., 2009), important variable in agrometeorological applications.  $R_s$  varies according to the latitude, the apparent movement of the sun over the day and year and atmospheric conditions (cloudiness, concentration of aerosols, gases and pollutants) – (JERSZURKI; SOUZA, 2013). Therefore, it is indispensable understand its spatial and temporal variation (SILVA et al., 2012).

When not available series  $R_s$ , it can be estimated by other models that consider meteorological parameters, such as temperature, air humidity, rainfall and insolation (HARGREAVES; SAMANI, 1982; THORNTON; RUNNING, 1999; WEISS; HAYS, 2004), even using the output of climate and mesoscale models as, for example, the regional circulation model HadRM3 (DELGADO et al., 2014).

Castellví (2008) when evaluate three models (Bristow and Campbell; Hargreaves and Castellví) to estimate the daily  $R_s$  in dry climates depending on air temperature and rainfall data, verified that the

combined use of Hargreaves and Castellví methods increases the accuracy in estimating the daily  $R_s$ . However, studies for estimate  $R_s$  in municipalities of the State of Rio de Janeiro have not been performed. Therefore, the objective of this study was to evaluate Hargreaves-Samani (HS), Thornton-Running (TR) and Weiss (WS) modelos for estimating the  $R_s$  in the municipality of Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The municipality of Seropédica, at 22° 44' 38'' S, 43° 42' 27'' W and 26 m of altitude, located in the state of Rio de Janeiro and has an area of about 266.55 km<sup>2</sup>. Although considered politically as a member of the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro (RMRJ), geographically is situated in an fluminense coastal plain area denominated Baixada de Sepetiba.

Limited to the south (S) by the Atlantic Ocean, this lowland has as internal limits the Serra do Mar to west (W) and northwest (NW), the massif of Pedra Branca to the east (E), Serra dos Órgãos to northeast (NE), Serra da Mantiqueira to northwest (NW) and, to north (N) and northeast (NE), a succession of low-lying hills, incorporating the call landscape Mar de Morros (GASPARINI et al., 2013).

According to Köppen classification, the climate of the region is 'Aw', with rainfall concentrated between November and March, average annual rainfall of 1,213 mm and average annual air temperature of 23.9°C (CARVALHO et al., 2011). The study was performed based on data initially schedules which have been integrated to determine the total daily incident solar radiation ( $R_s$ , MJ m<sup>-2</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>) and maximum ( $t_x$ , °C) and minimum air temperature ( $t_n$ , °C) corresponding to the period January 2008 to December 2013. Data were obtained from Estação Meteorológica Automática (EMA), called Ecologia Agrícola, belonging to the Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia (INMET).

Data were subjected to treatment quality and consistency, with the purpose of to eliminate possible inconsistencies. In these processes we used the criterion of elimination proposed by Liu et al. (2009): missing data  $t_x$  and  $t_n$  or  $t_x \geq t_n$  and  $R_s/R_a > 1$  ( $R_a$  is extraterrestrial radiation at the top of the atmosphere, MJ m<sup>-2</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>) were eliminated.

The models evaluated in this study used the daily temperature range as the input variable. Two of the models (Thornton-Running and Weiss) are modified versions of Bristow and Campbell model (1984). In all cases, were kept the constants of the

models as originally proposed, ie, in this study was not aimed at the local calibration. Only we assessed HS, TR and WS models with  $t_x$  and  $t_n$  as input data.

Hargreaves and Samani (1982) were the precursors in the estimation of incident solar radiation based on air temperature, according to Equation 1. These authors adopted two patterns for  $k_t$  value for estimating the  $R_s$ ; one for the interior regions, where weather patterns are dominated by large air masses; another to coastal regions, where weather patterns are dominated by the proximity to the coastal environment. In this study, we evaluated both  $k_t$  values because Seropédica is situated near a large body of water (Baía de Sepetiba, 18.5 km), following by Oceano Atlântico (25 km) and, therefore receives influence of both bodies of water.

$$R_s = k_t R_a \sqrt{t_x - t_n} \quad (1)$$

wherein:  $k_t$  is calibration coefficient equal to 0.16 (interior region) and 0.19 (costal region), dimensionless,  $t_x$  and  $t_n$  and  $R_a$  according to Borges et al. (2009).

Thornton and Running (1999) use daily and monthly temperature range to determine the overall transmissivity coefficient of the atmosphere, according to the Equations 2 and 3:

$$R_s = R_{so} \left[ 1 - 0,9 \exp(-B(t_x - t_n)^{1,5}) \right] \quad (2)$$

$$B = 0,031 + 0,201 \exp(-0,185 \Delta t_m) \quad (3)$$

wherein:  $B$  is empirical adjustment coefficient, dimensionless. The adjustment coefficient  $B$  is determined based on local climatological normal through the parameter,  $\Delta t_m$  is daily monthly temperature range (°C) and  $R_{so}$  is the solar radiation in day without cloudiness (MJ m<sup>-2</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>).

Weiss et al. model (2001) uses in addition to the air temperature range, uses the extraterrestrial radiation at the top of the atmosphere to estimate  $R_s$ , according to Equations 4 and 5:

$$R_s = 0,75 \left[ 1 - \exp\left(-0,226 \frac{(\Delta T)^2}{R_a}\right) \right] R_a \quad (4)$$

$$\Delta t = t_{x,i} - \left( \frac{t_{n(1)} + t_{n(i+1)}}{2} \right) \quad (5)$$

Parametric statistical tests were used to assess the normality (Shapiro-Wilks and Jarque-Bera) and homogeneity (Bartlett) in the data series, using the environment software R version 3.1.1.

Shapiro-Wilk's test (S-W) has been used in the literature to determine whether a random sample follows the normal distribution. Through the command *shapiro.test* applied in the environment R

were obtained from the statistical values of  $W$  and  $p$ -value of standardized residues observed and estimated of  $R_s$ , being formulated the hypotheses nullity  $H_0$  and alternative  $H_1$ , according to Equation 6.

$$W = \frac{\left( \sum_{i=1}^n a_{n-i+1} (x_{n-i+1} - x_1) \right)^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2} \quad (6)$$

wherein:  $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ , are the sample size;  $x_i$  = ordered values of the sample;  $\bar{x}$  = average sample value;  $a_{n-i+1}$  = constants generated from middle, variances and covariances of the statistical order of a sample size  $N$  and a normal distribution;  $W$  = statistical variable from  $S$ - $W$ .

The conditions so that the observed data set  $R$  to be to a normal distribution at probability level  $\alpha$  is defined by: (i) for  $W_{cal} \leq W_{tab}$  is rejected  $H_0$  for  $p$ -value  $\alpha < 0.05$  and (ii) for  $W_{cal} \geq W_{tab}$  is accept  $H_0$  for  $p$ -value  $\alpha > 0.05$ .

Jarque-Bera's test (BERA; JARQUE, 1980), based on the difference between the coefficients of asymmetry and kurtosis of the sample data  $x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n$  and the theoretical from normal distribution. The statistical  $JB$  shows asymptotic distribution  $\chi^2$  with  $\nu = 2$  degrees of freedom under the null hypothesis of normality, the test is defined according to Equations 7, 8 and 9:

$$JB = n \left[ \frac{(\sqrt{b_1})^2}{6} + \frac{(b_2 - 3)^2}{24} \right] \quad (7)$$

$$\sqrt{b_1} = \frac{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^3}{\left[ \sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2} \right]^3} \quad (8)$$

$$b_2 = \frac{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^4}{\left[ \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \right]^2} \quad (9)$$

wherein:  $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ , is the sample size;  $\sqrt{b_1}$  and  $b_2$  are the asymmetry and kurtosis coefficients;  $\bar{x}$  = sample average;  $x_i$  = ordered sample values,  $\chi^2_{\nu=2}$  = chi-squared distribution with two degrees of freedom.

The null and alternative hypothesis by the Jarque-Bera's test are defined as: (i) for  $JB \geq \chi^2_{(1-\alpha, \nu=2)}$  is rejected  $H_0$  for  $p$ -value  $\alpha < 0.05$  and

(ii) for  $JB \leq \chi^2_{(1-\alpha, \nu=2)}$  is accept  $H_0$  for  $p$ -value  $\alpha > 0.05$ .

Bartlett's test is used to verify the supposition that  $K$  samples from a population with equal variances (homogeneity). In the study we tested the homogeneity of variance of the observed and estimated data from  $R_s$ .

Bartlett's test statistic ( $B_0$ ) was determined by Equations 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15:

$$N = \sum_{j=1}^n n_j \quad (10)$$

$$S_i^2 = \sum_{j=1}^{n_i} \frac{(y_{ij} - \bar{y}_i)^2}{n_i - 1} \quad (11)$$

$$S_p^2 = \frac{1}{N - k} \sum_{i=1}^k (n_i - 1) S_i^2 \quad (12)$$

$$q = (N - k) \ln S_p^2 - \sum_{i=1}^k [(n_i - 1) \ln S_i^2] \quad (13)$$

$$c = 1 + \frac{1}{3(k-1)} \left( \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{1}{n_i - 1} - \frac{1}{N - k} \right) \quad (14)$$

wherein,  $B_0$  is defined as:

$$B_0 = \frac{q}{c} \quad (15)$$

$B_0$  on the hypothesis  $H_0 \approx \chi^2_{k-1}$

wherein,  $N$  = number of observations,  $n_i$  and  $k$  = number of observations within groups,  $S_i^2$  = sample variance,  $S_p^2$  = population variance,  $q$  = numerator coefficient,  $c$  = denominator coefficient,  $\chi^2_{k-1}$  = chi-square distribution,  $\alpha$  = significance level and  $B_0$  = Bartlett's test statistic.

Wherein  $X$  is a feature of study, we formulated the hypotheses: (i)  $H_0$ : Incident solar radiation data  $R_s$  have homogeneous variances and (ii)  $H_1$ : Incident solar radiation data  $R_s$  have not homogeneous variances.

The conditions for the  $R_s$  dataset shows homogeneity or heterogeneity of variances at the level of probability  $\alpha$  is: for  $B_0 \geq \chi^2_{(1-\alpha, k-1)}$  is rejected  $H_0$  for  $p$ -value  $\alpha < 0.05$  and (ii) for  $B_0 \leq \chi^2_{(1-\alpha, k-1)}$  is accept  $H_0$  for  $p$ -value  $\alpha > 0.05$ .

Performance analysis of modelos HS, TR and WS models were performed by comparing  $R_s$  estimated and observed values based on the following statistical parameters: coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ), root-mean-square error (RMSE, MJ m<sup>-2</sup> d<sup>-1</sup>), Willmot's concordance index ( $d$ ),

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ) and  $t$ -test (Student).

Wherein, the expected values of  $r^2$ ,  $d$ ,  $\rho_s$  and  $t$ -test nearest 1 and  $\rho_s$  at 1 and -1 positive and negative correlation, RMSE values tending to 0 indicate good model performance (BORGES et al., 2009). The lower the value of  $t$ -test, better model performance, since the mean differences between the estimated and observed values will be small (SILVA et al., 2012).

RMSE provides information about the real value of the errors generated by the models. Great magnitudes errors may result in significant increases in the values provided by the RMSE, and not differentiate overestimates of underestimates. The  $r^2$  indicates the accuracy of estimates, defined by Equation 16:

$$r^2 = 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (E_i - \bar{O})^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (O_i - \bar{O})^2} \quad (16)$$

The RQME is defined by Equation 17:

$$RQME = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (E_i - O_i)^2}{n}} \quad (17)$$

Willmott's index (d) (WILLMOT; MATSUURA, 2005) shows the correlation between the estimated values regarding to observed from  $R_s$ . It value ranges from 0 to 1, the agreement is greater when nearest to 1 and less precision when nearest to 0. Equation 18 is given by:

$$d = 1 - \left[ \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (E_i - O_i)^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n (|E_i - O_i| + |O_i - \bar{O}|)^2} \right] \quad (18)$$

Correlation between HS, TR and WS models was based in the  $t \hat{\rho}_s$  coefficient, generated in the environment R. According to Lira and Neto (2006),  $\rho_s$  coefficient is known for variables measured on an ordinal level, also known as Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, estimated as Equation 19:

$$\hat{\rho}_s = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \bar{y})^2}} \quad (19)$$

Equation 20 can be rewritten, as the following Equation:

$$\hat{\rho}_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum_{i=1}^n d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)} \quad (20)$$

wherein:  $\rho_s$  = Spearman's rank correlation coefficient;  $d_i$  = difference between the ordinations;  $n$  = number of pairs of ordinations.

For samples greater than  $n \geq 10$ , the Equation (21) has a *Student-t* distribution with  $n-2$  degrees of freedom.

$$t = \hat{\rho}_s = \sqrt{\frac{n-2}{1-\rho_s^2}} \approx t_{n-2} \quad (21)$$

wherein:  $\rho_s$  = Spearman's rank correlation coefficient;  $n$  = number of pairs of ordinations. To verify the hypothesis that the  $R_s$  values estimated by the models differ significantly between the  $R_s$  observed values, it was used *Student-t*, according to Equação 22.

$$t = \sqrt{\frac{(n-1)EM^2}{RMSE^2 - EM^2}} \quad (22)$$

wherein,  $t$  critical value can be obtained from statistical table ( $t_{tab}$ , *t-Student*), with significance level  $\alpha$  and  $(n-1)$  degrees of freedom. A model was considered statistically significant when the null hypothesis  $H_0$  presented the following (is accept,  $H_0$ : estimated data was equal to the observed) in the range  $(1-\alpha)$ , if  $t_{cal}$  be less than the critical value.

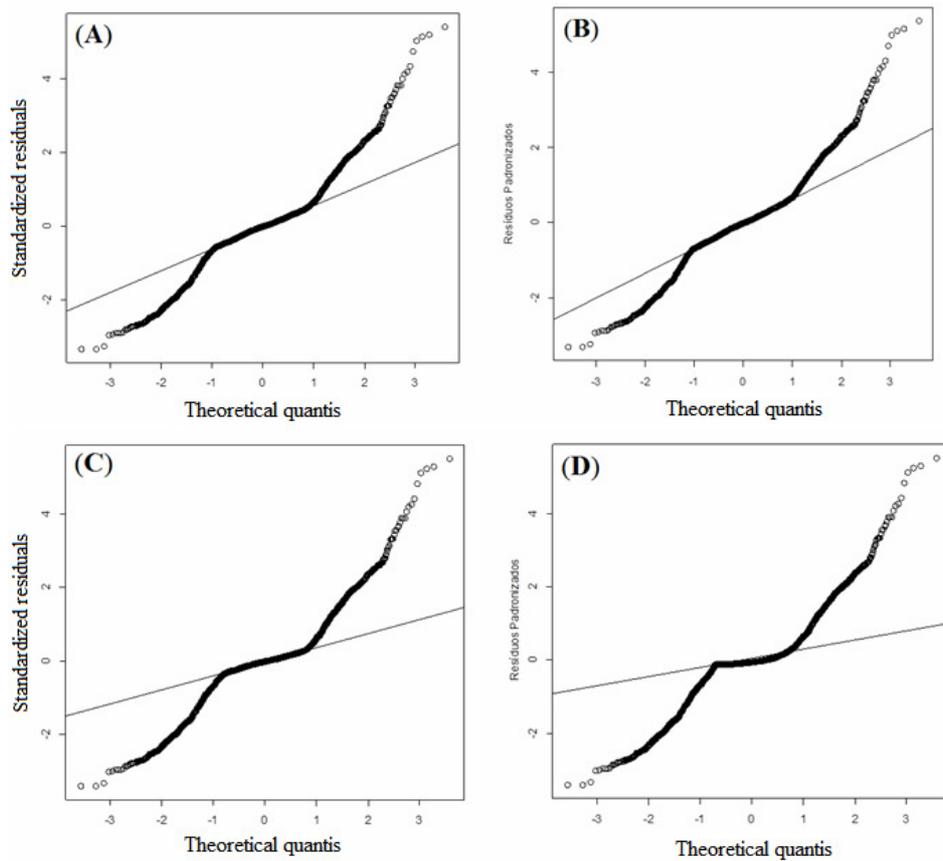
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained by Shapiro-Wilks (SW) and Jarque-Bera (JB) normality tests and Bartlett's variance homogeneity indicated the rejection of standardized residuals normality of variance hypothesis with p-value below level of significance at 5% probability in all models (Table 1).

It is possible to verify in Figure 1 the distance of waste from models used in the linear regression line, followed by high asymmetry coefficients for HS model for both cases (0.173), TR (0.179) and WS (6.65) and kurtosis for HS model for both cases (-0.214), TR (-0.189) and WS (-103.39). Bartlett's test indicated the presence of heteroscedasticity of variance for all the models tested (Table 1), with values of calculated chi-square distribution lower than Bartlett's values below the significance at 5% probability, with p-value equal to  $2.48 \times 10^{-7}$ .

**Table 1.** Parametric Tests of Normality (Shapiro-Wilks and Jarque Bera) and Homogeneity of Variance Test (Bartlett).

Models/Tests	Jarque-Bera		Shapiro-Wilks		Bartlett	
	$\chi^2$	p-value	W	p-value	$\chi^2$	p-value
HS (interior)	947.52	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	0.939	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	22847.63	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$
HS (coastal)	816.16	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	0.950	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	22558.94	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$
TR	1213.50	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	0.907	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	23492.31	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$
WS	1269.18	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	0.889	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$	24189.94	$2.48 \times 10^{-7}$



**Figure 1.** Standardized residuals *versus* Theoretical Quantis of Hargreaves-Samani (interior) (A), Hargreaves-Samani (coastal) (B), Thornton-Running (C) and Weiss (D) models.

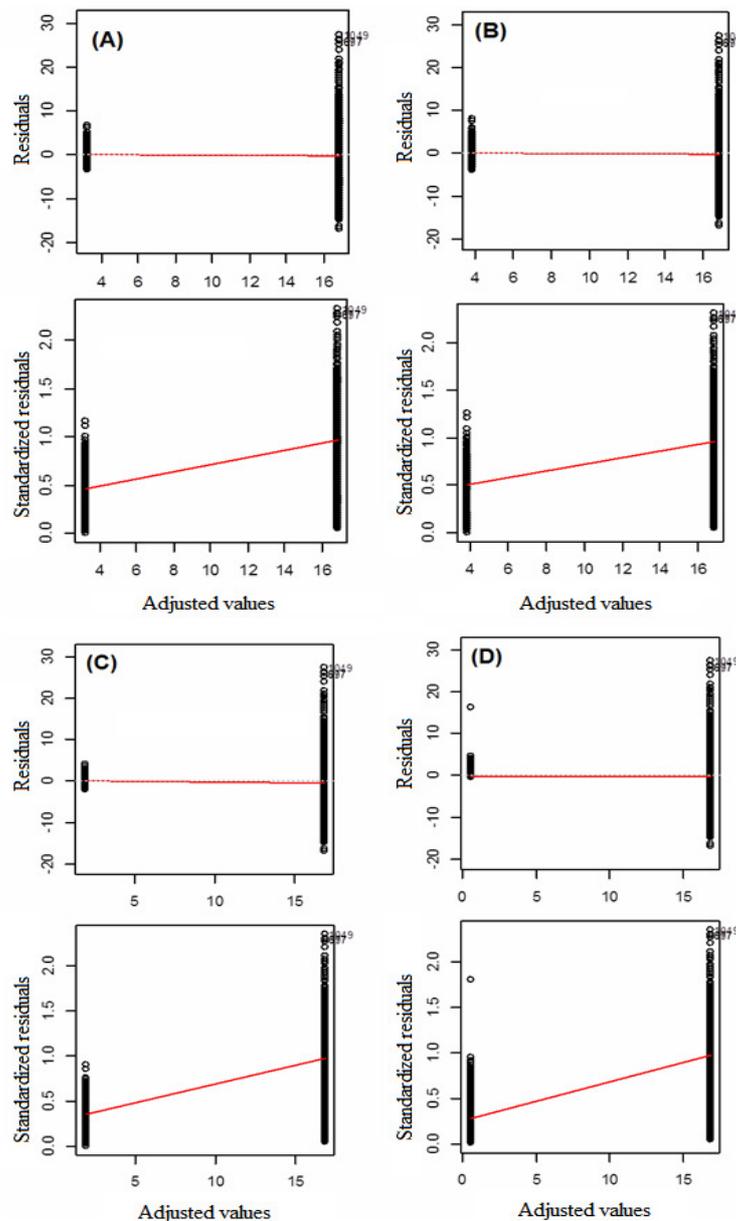
We verified from Figure 2 that the tested models showed a linear growth trend of waste variance followed by underestimation of  $R_s$  estimated values, or values whose square root is greater than two. Moreover, there were no notable differences in the dispersion of waste (heterogeneity of variances) by combining levels of average factors and  $R_s$  estimated by the models, justifying the results obtained for the parametric tests of normality and homogeneity of variance.

Values around unity indicate high positive correlation of the observed and estimated  $v$  values. HS models, regardless of used  $k_t$  (interior – 0.93 and

coastal – 0.93), and TR (0.92) obtained high values for  $r^2$ , which indicates possibility to obtain estimates of  $R_s$  with high precision (Table 2). Based on this parameter, the WS model has low positive correlation of observed and estimated  $R_s$ , suggesting inadequacy of this model to estimates of  $R_s$ . These results differ from those obtained by Borges et al. (2010), that when assessing different models for estimating the  $R_s$  in the municipality of Cruz das Almas (BA), verified superior performance of WS and RT models in relation to the HS, based on this parameter. Studies that assess the models adjusting

for estimated  $R_s$  are scarce in Brazil and for the state

of Rio de Janeiro, do not yet exist.



**Figure 2.** Residuals and standardized residuals *versus* Theoretical Quantis of Hargreaves-Samani (interior) (A), Hargreaves-Samani (coastal) (B), Thornton-Running (C) and Weiss (D) models.

**Table 2.** Parameters of Hargreaves-Samani (HS) interior and coastal model, Thornton-Running (TR) and Weiss (WS) models, determination coefficient ( $r^2$ ), root-mean-square error (RMSE), Willmott's concordance index (d), Spearman's rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho_s$ ) and t calculated.

Modelos	$r^2$	RMSE ( $\text{MJ}\cdot\text{m}^{-2}\text{d}^{-1}$ )	d	$\hat{\rho}_s$	t calculated
HS (Interior)	0.93	14.60	0.44	0.964	71.93
HS (Coastal)	0.93	13.93	0.46	0.964	68.02
TR	0.92	16.07	0.40	0.958	80.29
WS	0.03	17.61	0.37	0.276	87.70

We verified low values of the rate  $d$  in both models evaluated, in the order of 0.4 Borges et al. (2010) and Jerszurki and Souza (2013) obtained  $d$  values in magnitude greater than this study in the evaluation of these models for estimating the  $R_s$  in the municipalities of Cruz das Almas (BA) and Telêmaco Borba (PR). RMSE values indicated that all models underestimated the  $R_s$  values.

T-test values obtained from the models indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis (Table 3). The estimated  $R_s$  values differ statistically, ie, the models are not significant at the  $\alpha$  significance level, at 5% probability. Estimated and observed  $R_s$  values for  $t_{cal} > t_{tab}$  were above the confidence interval of 1.96 at 5% probability.

TR model, with greater physical reasoning, it has the advantage of not producing estimates of  $R_s$  greater than  $R_a$ , in addition to be able to estimate  $R_a$  values, given that for a specific  $\Delta T_m$  value the relation  $R_s/R_a$  converges to 1 in a broad spectrum of  $\Delta T$  values. WS model has proved unsuitable to estimate  $R_s$  in Seropédica, RJ, with values of EAM and RMSE superior to other empirical models. It is important to mention that until this moment do not exist in literature local calibration for accomplished tests. Similar results were observed by Ball et al. (2004) and Borges et al. (2010), which verified the limitations of this model to estimate the  $R_s$  and emphasized the existing limitations to the transferability of this model to other regions without adequate local calibration, since it was calibrated

with meteorological data from the locality of Mead, Nebraska (WEISS et al., 2001).

HS model, which showed better indices, regardless of used  $k_t$ , is a conservative model, where estimates rarely overestimated  $R_s$  for clear sky conditions (ALLEN, 1996). This is a desirable feature of the model, where  $R_s$  measured in absence of clouds is an upper limit for the  $R_s$  in a given locality.

## CONCLUSIONS

Bartlett's test indicated the presence of heterogeneity of the estimates of the models.

The Hargreaves-Samani and Thornton-running models had high values of  $r^2$  and low values of  $d$ .

Based on the statistical parameters, Hargreaves-Samani model is the most indicated to estimate incident solar radiation in Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro, but Thornton-Running can be used with lower precision, while Wess model should not be used while. For future researches, it is necessary to fit the coefficients of the evaluated models for the climatic conditions from Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro.

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**RESUMO:** A radiação solar incidente ( $R_s$ ) é normalmente utilizada como variável de entrada em modelos de simulação de crescimento e produtividade de culturas agrícolas, no delineamento de sistemas alternativos de geração de energia, desing de edifícios, na climatologia, em projetos de irrigação e conservação de alimentos, entre outros. Entretanto, no Brasil, há escassez de pesquisas que avaliaram o desempenho de diferentes modelos na estimativa de  $R_s$ . Portanto, o objetivo do trabalho é avaliar os modelos Hargreaves-Samani, Thornton-Running e Weiss para estimativa da  $R_s$  no município de Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro. Utilizaram-se medidas horárias da radiação solar incidente ( $R_s$ ,  $\text{KJ m}^{-2}$ ) e da temperatura do ar máxima ( $t_x$ , °C) e mínima ( $t_m$ , °C) obtidas na estação Ecologia Agrícola (EA), entre janeiro/2008 a dezembro/2013. Testes de normalidade (Shapiro-Wilks e Jarque-Bera) e homogeneidade de variância (Bartlett) foram aplicados à série de dados. O desempenho dos modelos foi avaliado com base em diferentes parâmetros estatísticos ( $r^2$ , RMSE,  $d$ ,  $\rho_s$  e teste-t de Student). Os resultados indicaram a rejeição da hipótese de normalidade de variância dos resíduos padronizados pelos testes de Shapiro-Wilks e Jarque-Bera. O teste de Bartlett indicou a presença de heterogeneidade das estimativas dos modelos. Os modelos Hargreaves-Samani e Thornton-Running tiveram altos valores de  $r^2$  e baixos valores de  $d$ . O modelo de Hargreaves-Samani (costeiro) se sobressaiu em relação aos demais, sendo mais adequado para estimar a  $R_s$  no município de Seropédica, Rio de Janeiro.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Modelos empíricos. Extremos da temperatura do ar. Baixada fluminense.

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