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Diameter-Age Growth Curve Modelling for Different Tree Species in Drylands of North Karnataka

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Keywords : height, age, model, species, growth.

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Abstract - Among 24 tree species tested for diameter and age relationship under Agroforestry systems of northern dry zone of Karnataka, Gompertz model fitted well for 20 species, Exponential model for 2 species, Weibull model found well suited for one species and Richards model for one species, respectively. Among the different models tried in predicting diameter growth for 24 different species Gompertz model was found better for *Acacia auriculiformis* ($R^2 = 0.9956$), *Acacia catechu* ($R^2 = 0.9972$), *Acacia nilotica* ($R^2 = 0.9938$), *Bahunia purpurea* ($R^2 = 0.9950$), *Butea monosperma* ($R^2 = 0.9968$), *Casuarina equisetifolia* ($R^2 = 0.9979$), *Cassia siamea* ($R^2 = 0.9986$), *Dalbergia sissoo* ($R^2 = 0.9944$), *Delonix regia* ($R^2 = 0.9953$), *Emblica officinalis* ($R^2 = 0.9944$), *Eucalyptus citriodara* ($R^2 = 0.9983$), *Eucalyptus hybrid* ($R^2 = 0.9988$), *Hardwickia binata* ($R^2 = 0.9969$), *Anogeissus latifolia* ($R^2 = 0.9962$), *Inga dulce* ($R^2 = 0.9931$), *Peltoferrum ferrugeneum* ($R^2 = 0.9978$), *Prosopsis juliflora* ($R^2 = 0.9989$), *Samanea saman* ($R^2 = 0.9982$), *Syzygium cumini* ($R^2 = 0.9976$) and *Tamarindus indica* ($R^2 = 0.9953$). Hence, Gompertz model can be best adopted while predicting diameter growth of native species grown under dry land situation.

Keywords : height, age, model, species, growth.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tree height and diameter relationship is an important component in yield estimation, stand description, and damage appraisals (Parresol, 1992). Many height and diameter equations have been developed for various tree species (Wykoff *et al.*, 1982; Huang *et al.*, 1992). Among the variety of mathematical equations, sigmoidal or non-linear growth functions are widely used in developing tree height and diameter equations. Foresters often use height-diameter models to predict total tree height ($c-l$) based on observed diameter at breast height (DBH) for estimating tree or stand volume and site quality. Therefore, estimations of tree or stand volume and site quality rely heavily on accurate height-diameter functions. The general diameter/age relationship is represented by the cumulative growth curve (CGC) which is sigmoidal for biological systems.

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Growth models assist forest researchers and managers in many ways. Some important uses include the ability to predict future yields and to explore silvicultural options. Models provide an efficient way to prepare resource forecasts, but a more important role may be their ability to explore management options and silvicultural alternatives. For example, foresters may wish to know the long-term effect on both the forest and on future harvests of a particular silvicultural decision, such as changing the cutting limits for harvesting. With a growth model, they can examine the likely outcomes, both with the intended and alternative cutting limits, and can make their decision objectively. The process of developing a growth model may also offer interesting and new insights into the forestry. Growth models may also have a broader role in forest management and in the formulation of forest policy. The same could be used as an advantage and in conjunction with other resource and environmental data, to make prediction, formulate prescriptions and guide forest policy decisions into stand dynamics. Hence looking to the importance of growth models in forestry, the present study was carried out to develop growth models for different tree species under dryland conditions of north Karnataka.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The experiment was conducted at Regional Agricultural Research Station, Bijapur of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, Karnataka from 1990-2000. The soils of the experimental site were analyzed for various physico-chemical properties (Sand 25%, Silt 23%, Clay 52%, bulk density 1.43 g/cc, pH- 8.5, EC- 0.34 dSm⁻¹, CaCO₃ 18.5% and soil depth 30-35 cm). The average rainfall of the site is 594 mm with 39 rainy days. 24 tree species *Viz.*, *Acacia auriculiformis*, *Acacia catechu*, *Acacia nilotica*, *Leucaena leucocephala*, *Albizia lebbeck*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Bahunia purpurea*, *Butea monosperma*, *Casuarina equisetifolia*, *Cassia siamea*, *Dalbergia sissoo*, *Delonix regia*, *Emblica officinalis*, *Eucalyptus citriodara*, *Eucalyptus hybrid*, *Hardwickia binata*, *Anogeissus latifolia*, *Inga dulce*, *Peltoferrum ferrugeneum*, *Pongamia pinnata*, *Prosopsis juliflora*, *Samanea saman*, *Syzygium cumini* and *Tamarindus indica* were planted in 1990 at RARS Bijapur and data were collected at one year interval till 2000.

The experiment was laid out in Randomized Complete Block Design (RCBD) with 2 replications. The trees were planted at a spacing of 2m x 2m and examined for 11 consecutive years. For developing growth curves the diameter at breast height (DBH) (cm) using vernier caliper were recorded.

Developing diameter growth curves for 24 different tree species was done by selecting five non-

linear models to compare fitness of these models to data (Thornley and France, 2007). The rationality behind the use of these growth models lies in the fact that these models have some important parameters enabling to comment on the growth process.

1. Gompertz model	$Y = a * \exp(-\exp(b^c - cx))$ Where a, b, c are the parameters in the model.
2. Exponential model	$Y = a * \exp(-b/(x+c))$ Where a, b and c are the parameters.
3. Weibull model	$Y = a(1-b * \exp(-c * x^d))$ Where a, b, and c are the parameters.
4. Richards model	$Y = a * (1 - \exp(b * x))^c$ Where a, b and c are the parameters in the model y is age and X is diameter.
5. Korf model	$Y = a * \exp(-b * x^c - c)$ Where a, b and c are the parameters in the model

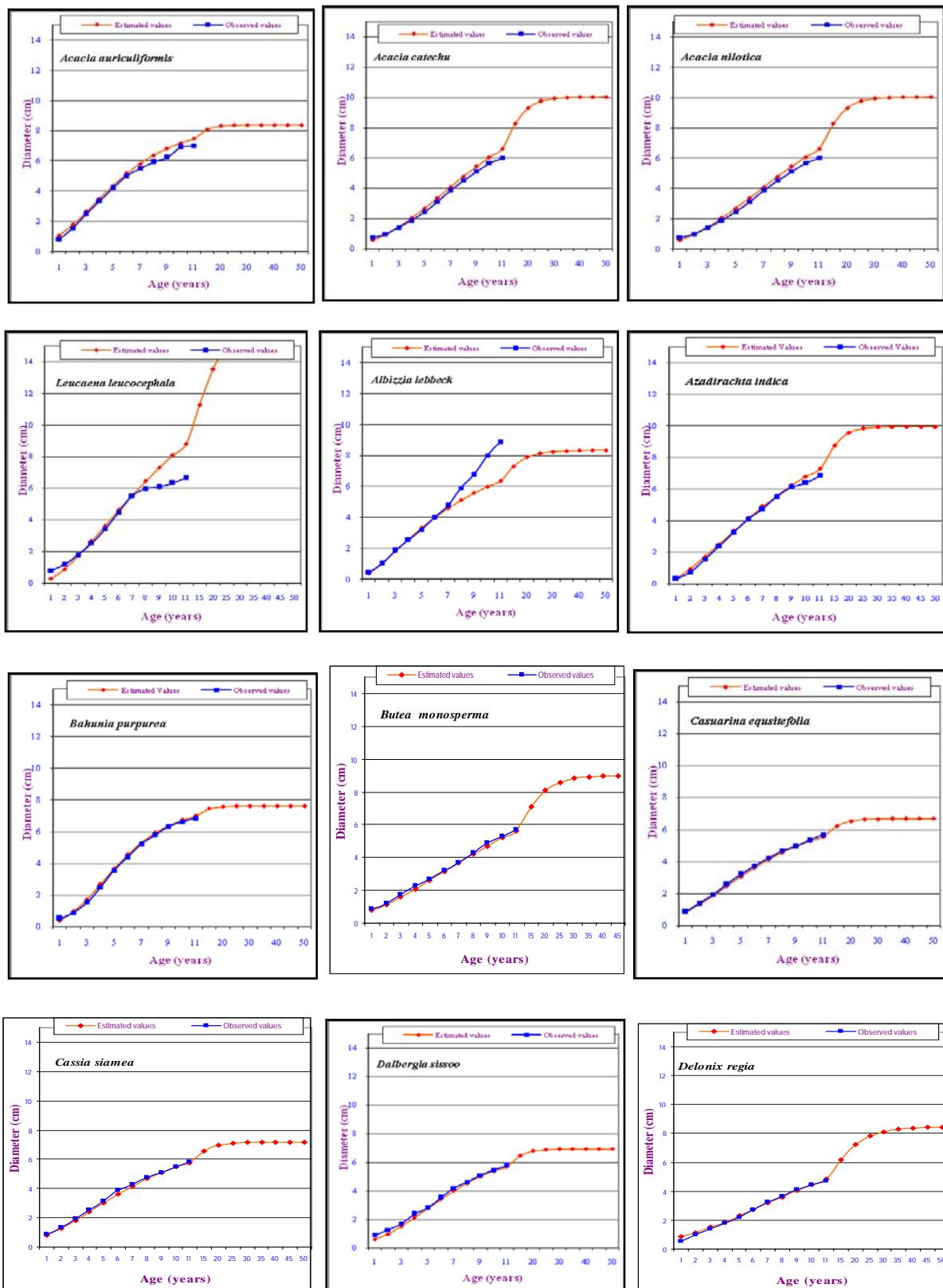
III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

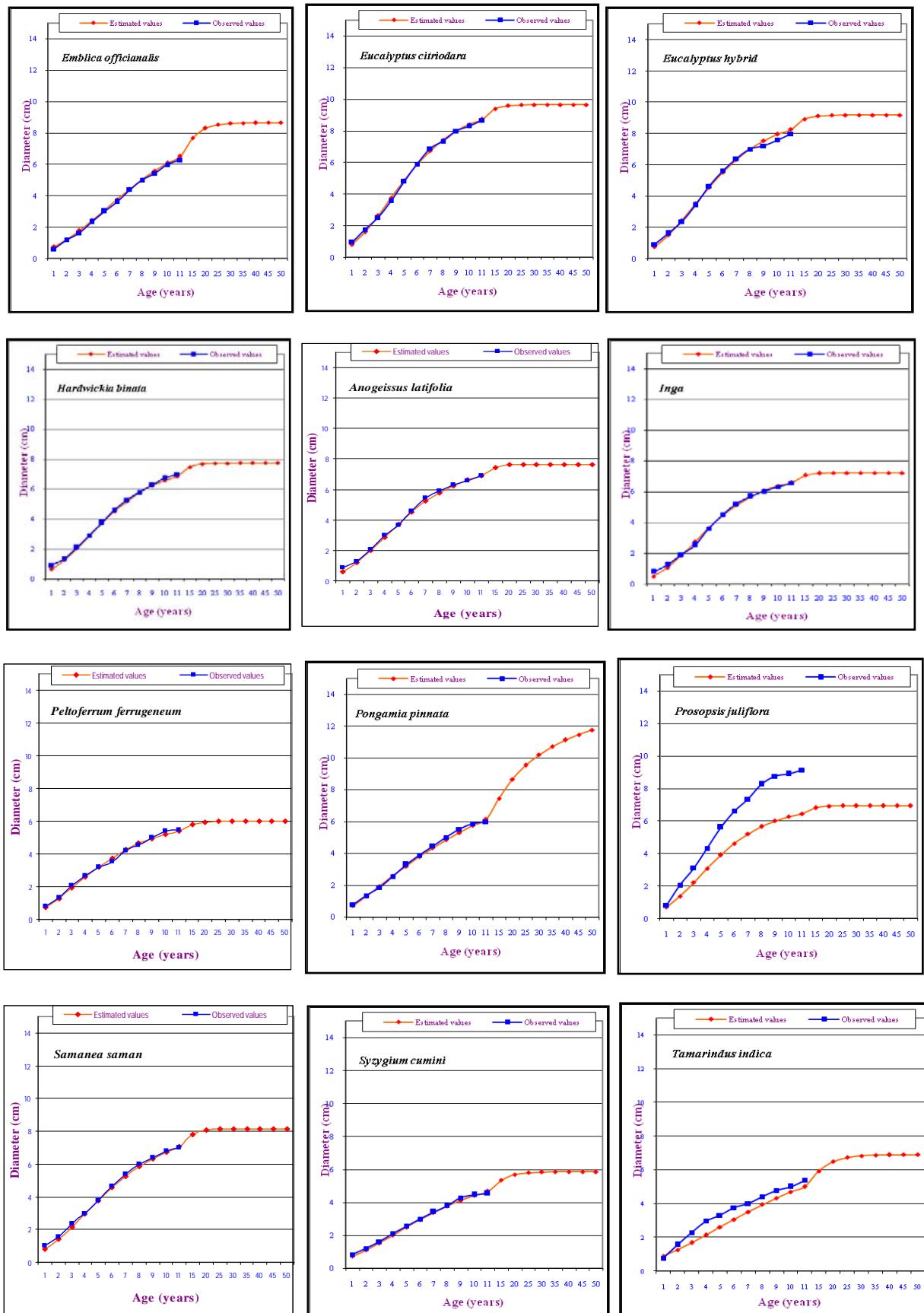
Among the different models tried in predicting diameter growth for 24 different species, Gompertz model was found better for *Acacia auriculiformis* ($R^2 = 0.9956$), *Acacia catechu* ($R^2 = 0.9972$), *Acacia nilotica* ($R^2 = 0.9938$), *Bahunia purpurea* ($R^2 = 0.9950$), *Butea monosperma* ($R^2 = 0.9968$), *Casuarina equisetifolia* ($R^2 = 0.9979$), *Cassia siamea* ($R^2 = 0.9986$), *Dalbergia sissoo* ($R^2 = 0.9944$), *Delonix regia* ($R^2 = 0.9953$), *Emblica officinalis* ($R^2 = 0.9944$), *Eucalyptus citriodara* ($R^2 = 0.9983$), *Eucalyptus hybrid* ($R^2 = 0.9988$), *Hardwickia binata* ($R^2 = 0.9969$), *Anogeissus latifolia* ($R^2 = 0.9962$), *Inga dulce* ($R^2 = 0.9931$), *Peltoperrum ferrugineum* ($R^2 = 0.9978$), *Prosopis juliflora* ($R^2 = 0.9989$), *Samanea saman* ($R^2 = 0.9982$), *Syzygium cumini* ($R^2 = 0.9976$) and *Tamarindus indica* ($R^2 = 0.9953$).

Exponential model found suitable for *Leucana leucocephala* ($R^2 = 0.9958$) and *Pongamia pinnata* ($R^2 = 0.9987$). Whereas, Richards model was found better for *Albizia lebbeck* ($R^2 = 0.9986$) and Weibull model for *Azadirachta indica* ($R^2 = 0.9983$) (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Among five growth models tested in diameter and age relationship study, Korf, Richards and Weibull models showed least fit in almost every tree species. Among other two models Gompertz model showed best fit with highest R^2 and least standard error. Among 24 different tree species, Gompertz model showed best fit for 20 species among which sixteen species were native to semiarid conditions. Gompertz model showed faster early growth but slower approach to asymptote with a longer linear period about inflection point (Thornley and France, 2007) and reported to be more accurate than any other models of forest growth (Zhang, 1997). Arid conditions of the experimental site might also impart such slow approach to the asymptote. Exponential

model better fitted for two species with highest R^2 and lesser standard error and parameters with asymptote t-values. Richards model showed best fit for one species i.e. *Albizia lebbeck* and Weibull model for one species i.e., *Leucana leucocephala* which is an introduced fast growing tree species. Despite considering initial years of growth of all tree species which are characterized by exponential growth period, the exponential model did not show robustness in predicting in all species. But overall performance of models was better in which all models were showed R^2 between 0.98 and 0.99 except Korf and Weibull model. Mean prediction error, standard deviation and R^2 were adopted as criteria for comparing model prediction performance of growth functions. The apparent reason for high R^2 values associated with linear models is that the data set usually belongs to the second phase of tree growth and which is linear in nature (Srivastava and Ajit, 2002). In this Gompertz function showed superiority over other models for 20 species in DBH – Age relationship.

Figure 1 : Diameter-Age growth curves of different tree species under semi-arid regions of north Karnataka



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