PHY480 REPORT

**1. Abstract**

**2. Introduction**

**3. Body**

**3.1 Literature review**

**3.1.1 NBODY problem**

Newton’s law of gravitation describes how a group of stars interact in a star cluster. These gravitational interactions cause the dynamical properties (velocity, position, acceleration) of the stars to change. This causes a change in the dynamical properties of the whole region. The evolution of this stellar region can be observed in a NBODY simulation. The NBODY problem is incorporates the prediction of future dynamical properties of the stars in the system. The initial properties of the particles in the system are known. In a system of N particles, the acceleration of a particle can be defined as,

-1

Where, mass of the test particle

the unit vector along the direction of the distance vector

the modulus square of the distance between the bodies considered

Integrating equation (1) provides the position and velocity of a particle at any time t. For *N*=2 the above equation is analytically solvable. Since we are considering stellar clusters as our system, where N2, numerical methods are considered.

Numerical integration of equation 1 provides the below solutions.

-2

-3

Where, and the new position and velocity of the particles.

and the initial position and velocity of the particles

, , , the initial acceleration of the particles with the latter three being the 1st, 2nd, 3rd time derivatives.

timestep for the simulation

The timestep *dt* determines the accuracy of the values of the future position and velocity of the particles. It goes inversely with the computational time. There is a rise in the number of calculations done in a single simulation as *dt* drops.

Accuracy in predicting the motion of stars in the cluster is the main task. The error in the solution is proportional to the timestep. As we go to higher orders, a small drop in *dt* will imply a large reduction in the error.

For our project we consider the 2nd order method, with the 4th order predictor-corrector (Hermite scheme) method used in semester 2. Below are the equations used for the second order method.

-4

-5

The 4th order predictor-corrector method improves on the accuracy of the previous methods.

**3.1.2 History of NBODY simulation**

**3.1.3 Astrophysics applications of NBODY method**

* Neptune migration into the destabilised the Kuiper belt- the interaction of Neptune with the destabilised Kuiper belt causing the formation of Kuiper belt objects
  + PROBLEM TO ADDRESS-to show the presence of the current Kuiper belt objects at Neptune’s 5:2 resonance due to the outward migration of Neptune into a stirred Kuiiper belt.
* Kuiper belt- residing beyond 30 AU, contains a vast number of residual plantesimals from the primordial planetesimal disk. This debris was not able to merge to form planetary mass objects.
* This belt, the relic of the outer solar system’s history.
* The orbital migration of the giant planets came from its interaction with the planetisimal disk, leading to exchange of angular momentum.
* This planet-migration scenario was the cause for pluto to gain a peculiar orbit, it being captured at neptune’s 3:2 resonance. Further evidence of this scenario came from the discovery of KBOs at 3:2 resonance.
* This is a planet-migration model, explaining why neptune’s outward migration caused KBOs at 5:2 resonance.
* NICE model- describes the outward migration of the outer planets, the destabilisation of the Kuiper belt and the current scenario of the Neptune and Uranus.
* NICE model explaining the origin of the Kuiper belt and its evolution
* Orbital evolution of giant planets while embedded in the planetesimal disk-
  + THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED-
    - Formation of the Kuiper belt and the oort cloud after the gravitational clearing of the remnant planetesimal disc.
    - Interactions between the giant planets and the planetesimals caused exchange of angular momentum and energy. This led to orbital expansions of the planets like Uranus, Neptune and Saturn.
    - These planetesimals start getting captured at various mean motion resonances of Neptune. The result of this causes a non-uniform orbital distribution of the Kuiper Belt Objects with varying eccentricities and inclinations for their orbits.
    - Therefore, look at the planet-migration scenario where we do numerical simulations of the evolution of the giant planets in the remnant planetesimal disc. Assumed the disc to contain low-mass particles.
    - The numerical method-
      1. Model involved the sun and the four giant planets with a population of low mass particles distributed in a disc.
      2. The ideal number of particles was . But there was restrictions in the computing power at that time.
      3. They used a fast body integrator with simplifications.
      4. Assumed each body as a point mass particle. It is justified since in the late stages of planet formation, the likeliness of planet-particle collisions is minimal. Since gravitational interactions dominate at that point.
      5. Another assumption- included the mutual gravitational forces between the planets and the forces between the planet and low mass particles. Neglected the mutual interactions the particles to avoid huge computational expense.
      6. A restriction placed on the upper limit of the semi-major axes of the particles. Particles where *a*>3000 AU would be removed. In dynamical models, particles scattered in wide orbits > 5000 AU get decoupled from the planets due to a galactic tide. These merge into the oort cloud.
      7. Used a second order mixed variable symplectic (MVS) mapping- this allowed for rapid advancement of the heliocentric positions and velocities of the planets and low-mass particles as they interact in the Sun’ Gravitational field.
  + A presence of residual planetesimal disk with mass 10-100 solar masses in the vicinity of the giant planets.
  + Planetary migration causing the disk to disappear due to the exchange of angular momentum between the planets and the planetesimals in the disk.
  + Final stage of planet formation- oligarchic phase. We see the clearing of the residual planetesimal disc by giant planets. When the giant planets formed, there would have been a residual planetesimal disc. But due to the gravitational interactions, this disc was cleared out. This affected the orbits of the planets as there was exchange of angular momentum involved.
  + Formation of the oort cloud coming from this stage. Mass of this cloud 10-100 solar masses, at distances of 1000-100000 AU from the sun.
  + Outward migration of Neptune- this migration of Neptune in the disturbed Kuiper belt caused several KBOs to be captured at various mean motion resonances of Neptune. Mainly we see a significant number of KBOs at a 3:2 resonance with an eccentricity of 0.1-0.35. we see a non-uniform distribution of KBOs orbits. Also pluto was captured at one of the resonances along with other KBOs.
  + There would be orbital expansion due to the gravitational clearing by Neptune. The semi-major axes and eccentricities of the KBOs should rise along with this expansion. From the analysis of the resonance-sweeping mechanism, if the planet migration of Neptune caused the eccentric and inclined orbits of pluto and KBOs, this would expand the orbit of Neptune by 5-10 AU.
  + There is a non-uniform KBO orbital distribution. This can provide the orbital migration history of Neptune.
* Oligarchic growth of protoplanets
  + Investigating the orbital evolution of protoplanets surrounded by large number of planetesimals using 3D Nbody simulations.
* Mass segregation in star clusters
* Bar diagnostics in edge-on spiral galaxies- Nbody simulations of disks

**3.2 Progress**

The initial work on the project was carried by constructing a simple second order code. Equation 5 can be corrected by considering an assumption.

-6

3.2.1 Three-body system

Initially we a three-body system of SUN-EARTH-JUPITER was considered for problem.

For the first block of the code, the declaration of all the variables used was done. For certain known variables like the gravitational constant *G*, the mass, velocity and initial positions of the planets, the initialisation is done. These values were obtained from the planetary fact sheet in the NASA website[1]. Initial conditions for the position and velocity were given. The orbits of the planets were forced to be on the XY plane with the initial velocity equal to the y component.

For this system, we added the code which did centre-of-mass and velocity corrections. Since there is a common centre-of-mass for the Sun-Earth-Jupiter, we stop the system from drifting away from the origin during the simulations. The centre-of-mass and centre-of-velocity can be calculated as below,

To check the stability of this system, an energy conservation check had to be done. this required the initial energy to be determined using the values initialised above.

To carry out the simulations, an infinite loop was constructed which would up-to a simulation time (which is assigned before the loop). Along with this, a value for the timestep *dt* was also selected. Using the initial position of the objects, the future positions were first determined using equation 4. Then an acceleration loop was created which calculated the future accelerations of the bodies using equation 1.

We declare all the variables (, etc.) to be included in the code. The initialisation of the known variables is done (i.e. setting , number of bodies, *n*=3, etc.)

For this system, we set certain initial conditions for the velocity and position of the bodies.

This forces the bodies to orbit in the XY plane, starting from the X axis with the initial velocity in the Y direction.

The most important part of this code comes in creating an acceleration loop. This loop is used in determination of the initial acceleration, and the future acceleration, .

We produce a time loop which runs up-to 30 yrs. With the initial and future accelerations in hand, the future position and velocity of the bodies is calculated using equation 4 and 6. A figure is produced of the orbits of the three bodies using the x and y positions. The orbits of the Sun-Jupiter-Earth will drift away from the origin. However, it is not seen here since the running time was significantly short. This is due to the presence of a common centre of mass for the bodies which was not included at the beginning.

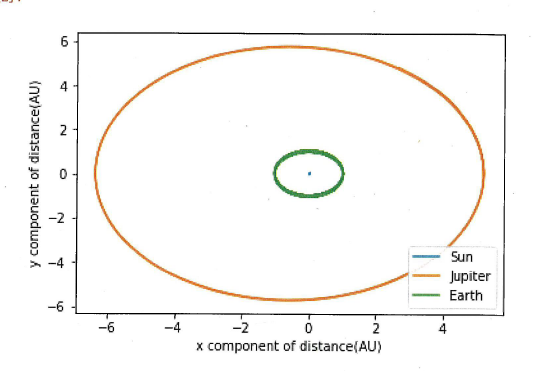


Figure 1: Orbits of the Sun-Jupiter-Earth with the simulations run for 30 yrs. The orbits are not corrected for the centre-of-mass and velocity.

To correct that, we introduce the centre-of-mass and velocity corrections (given in the code in the appendix). Then with the runtime changed to 100 yrs, the orbits did not show the drifts.

The stability of this system is checked using the fractional energy calculation using the equation given below.

Where and – the initial and the current energy of the system (at the current time, )

This energy conservation check was done with the timestep at 100 sec.

3.2.2 Whole solar system

To make the code more useful, the whole solar system is included. The known values of the position, velocity and mass are given. These values are taken from the Planetary fact sheet in the NASA website[1]. The simulations are made to run to 1000 yrs.

For this system, the energy conservation check is carried out, with a timestep of 1000 seconds. For every 6 months, the fractional energy values are noted. A fractional energy plot is produced for this system.

A screenshot of a cell phone

Description automatically generated

Figure 2: Fractional energy varying with time (in yrs) for the planets in the solar system.

Due to the very small values of the fractional energies, the system is stable.

Another stability test comes from investigating the how the distance from the sun () varies for the planets. The simulations are run for 1000 yrs with a similar timestep used. To reduce the computation time, the values for are taken at every 1000th iteration.

A screenshot of a social media post

Description automatically generatedFigure 3: Distance from the Sun (AU) against time (yrs).

The periodically varying curves give good idea of the stability of this system. The features in the curve for Saturn arrive from its interactions with Jupiter.

3.3 Project plan

At the start of week 1, the core part of the work in semester 2 begins with task1, i.e., building a basic fourth order predictor-corrector code. A time of 2-3 weeks is given for this task based on its difficulty. After forming the base, we require an adaptive timestep for the code (task 2). Depending on the errors obtained from the energy checks, the code either doubles or halves the timestep, *dt*. A similar amount of time of 3 weeks is assigned to this task. The two main components of the code are ready. This leads to task 3 of testing the code. The results obtained from these tests determine whether the code is working. For example, we should observe milankovic cycles when we produce the plot of the orbits of the planets in our Solar System.

Task 4 provides the motivation of writing this piece of code. We apply this code to any astrophysics problem (like late oligarchic phase of planet formation). Moreover, certain tweaks are added at this point to increase the speed of the code. With a time of 2 weeks, it overlaps with the easter break. Then we lead to the most important task 5, the write-up of the report. All the figures and results produced in tasks 3 and 4 are included in the report. Tasks 4 and 5 overlap at the beginning of easter break. A time of 3-4 weeks is assigned so that a draft of the final report can be submitted to the supervisor approximately two weeks before the deadline (17/05/2019). The final task involves in refining the report. Within a week the report is checked for any mistakes before the final submission.

4. Conclusion

5. References

[1]- <https://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/factsheet/>