

Welfare Facilities for Elderly People: Agent-Based Simulation for Planning Support of Daycare Center Development in Japanese Local City

Yan Ma, Zhenjiang Shen*, Xiaolu Gao

Institute of Geographic Sciences and Nature Resources Research, CAS,
Kanazawa University, Kanazawa, Japan
email corresponding author: shenzhe@t.kanazawa-u.ac.jp

Abstract

In recent decades, the planning policies regarding to welfare facilities for elderly people becomes more and more serious in Japan. Local governments in Japan manage to supply elderly people with numerous health care services through publishing necessary planning policies. In this research we will introduce an agent-based simulation model that can help local government decision-making on planning policies regarding daycare center development for elderly people. This model, namely DC location model has combined human lifecycle stage with the simulation of daycare center development and operation.

Local government decision-maker, elderly people, daycare center owner, four types of agents are included in the model, which can thereby be used to simulate and forecast the demand for daycare centers of elderly people in Japanese local cities. The simulation framework of the DC location model was designed on the rules and laws of Japan for daycare services, which follow the procedure of elderly people applying for daycare center services, government certificating them to choose and visit daycare centers and also, daycare center owners choosing locations for building centers and operating on them. In present research, the model has been tested by using the real GIS dataset of a Japanese local city from the year 2000 to

2010 and then, further used to forecast the demand for daycare centers of local elderly people till the year 2030. The visualized simulation results show the possibility of using this model for supporting local government decision-making on daycare center related planning policies.

1. Introduction

In last few decades, the number of people aged 65 and elder has been increased rapidly in Japan. According to statistic data of Japanese census survey, the number of aging population increased from nearly 12.3 million in 1985 to 29.3 million people in 2010. Along with the increase in elderly people, there are some laws and policies on welfare, health services, insurance for the aged people that were enacted, such as Old-age person's welfare law (1963), etc. and welfare facilities for elderly people, such as home care, day-care centers (hereafter, DC centers), etc. have been built more and more. In Kanazawa City, the number of elderly people made up 19.75% of total population in 2010 and number of elderly people who visited DC centers increased 2.3 times from 2000 to 2010 and this number suppose to increase in the future. In such situation the government of Ishikawa prefecture issued a project to investigate current status in aging population, living environment for elderly people, facilities for elderly people's health care, etc. During project local government supposed to do predictions for elderly people's living environment, demand for health care facilities, etc in 2030. Therefore, a question arising is that how many facilities will be built in order to serve those elderly people and where these facilities should be located. From literature, there are some approaches for choosing locations. Location-allocation, for instance, is an optimal approach for determining an optimal location for one or more facilities that will service demand from a given set of points. Besides that, Yang et al. employed an ordered logit model for investigating potential factors that contribute to the hotel location choice. Agent-based models emerged as powerful models in exploring the complexity of urban systems. Moreover, it is also a popular means for representing decision-making processes, such as choosing locations for facilities or relocations, choosing facilities for commuting or shopping (Chen et al, 2006; Vanhaverbeke et al, 2011; Huang et al., 2011; Shen et al , 2012). In the agent-based models, agents that are individuals will be created and can receive necessary information from an environment where they are living and located. Then, the agents can also display their behaviors and interact with each other in the envi-

ronment in order to achieve their goals. Furthermore, the simulation processes are designed based on those people do in the reality.

The purpose of this study is to develop an agent-based model for planners and policy-makers to consider planning strategies of DC centers through simulating how many DC centers would be built in urban area before making a plan regarding the locations of day-care centers. The simulation thus can provide very vivid visualization results of future age structure of population in research area and their demands for daycare centers. These kinds of simulation results can reflect the trend of population aging and the necessity of elderly people for daycare centers. From this viewpoint, this research can provide local government with visualized reference for considering the planning strategies before making a plan. As the advantages of agent-based simulation, our contribution to the existing literature is that we considered complex interactions between behavior and environment and gave rise to urban macro patterns in situations where decision-making are made under conditions of deep uncertainty. Moreover, unlike previous studies (Vanhaveerbeke et al, 2011; Huang et al, 2011) that simulated locations of retails using the virtual world, this study simulated the whole framework of business operation of DC centers by using the real Kanazawa City. The framework that includes location choice of DC centers, care levels, DC choices of elderly people, and DC centers' operation are designed based on the real situation. For more details, we will introduce in next section.

2. Method

We have collected and prepared datasets for simulation as following:

- GIS datasets on household and population distribution, land use zones of Kanazawa in 1985 for creating and locating household agents in our model
- Datasets on population from 1985 to 2010, data on number of elderly people who have visited DC centers and the number of DC centers from 1999 to 2010 in Kanazawa City for validating simulated results.
- A procedure for judging and deciding care levels issued by Japanese government

We used an agent-based model (CM Macal and MJ North, 2010) to implement the simulation and employed Netlogo software (authored by University of Wilensky in 1999) as simulation platform. Our model will simulate behaviors of DC centers owners on choosing location for building DC centers and the DC center-choosing behavior of elderly people in Kan-

azawa City. In the former, we applied Logistic Regression (Long Ying et al, 2008) for calculating the probability that indicates whether one cell will be chosen as a location of DC center or not. The latter is implemented by applying utility model (Chen Ping, 2006).

We also divided our model into five modules that are household lifecycle stage module, day-care center location choice module, care levels decision module, day-care center choice module and operation evaluation module.

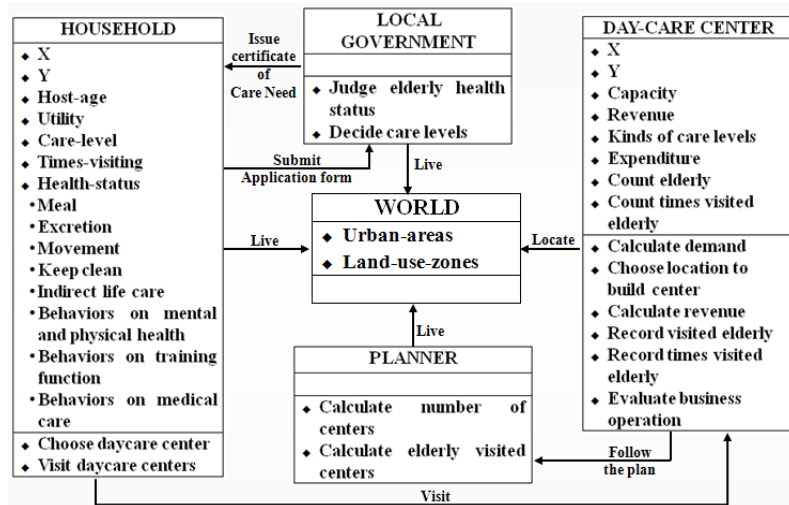


Fig.1 The agents and their interactions in the model

3. Model design

3.1 Assumptions for the simulation

- 1) The number of household agents in this simulation makes up 3.8 % (6825 households) of the real number of households in the year of 2000 that are 177,686 and they are living in three areas: Downtown (CCA), Urbanization Promotion Area (UPA), Urbanization Control Area (UCA);
- 2) We will use the data on population in 2000 as initial data on population and elderly people in our model and start the simulation from the year of 2000 with 6 existing DC centers;
- 3) People will not leave their houses to move to new locations;
- 4) The land use does not change from 1985 to 2010;
- 5) The simulation will run 30 ticks corresponding to a period of 30 years from 2000 to 2030;
- 6) The elderly who want to visit DC centers will

choose the nearest center to visit. And if the center is full of people, the elderly will be asked to choose another center randomly; 6) There are three kinds of DC centers with different capacities that are set as 15, 20, 25 respectively (The numbers here indicate the maximum number of elderly people that a DC center can serve at the same time) and different prices. The higher the capacity is, the higher the expenditure is; 7) For calculating the demand, the day-care center agents will consider the number of elderly people living in an area within a radius of 2.5 km, corresponding 5 cells, from a location they want to build a DC center.

3.2 Description of the model

In our model, we created 4 kinds of agents with different attributes and behaviors named planner agents, local government agents, day-care center agents and household agents that are living and located in urban space (figure 1). The urban space was divided into 3 areas: Downtown (CCA), Urbanization promotion area (UPA), Urbanization control area (UCA) (figure 6) and the two former are covered by 8 types of land use zones (figure 7). Moreover, the study area is a lattice with 468*752 cells in shape of square and each cell has a size in 50m*50m.

During the simulation, each agent displays its behaviors in order to obtain its objectives. Firstly, the DC center agents follow the plan of the planners and find suitable locations in CCA and UPA to build the DC centers. Next, to elderly agents who want to visit DC centers, they have to apply for a certificate of care need to local government. After that, the government agent judge the elderly people's health basing on 8 determinants, such as meal, excretion, movement, etc. and decide care levels for each elderly person. After receiving the certificate of care level, the elderly people visit a chosen DC center with a certain number of times per week. Finally, DC center agents count the elderly who visited their DC centers, calculate the revenue and compare the revenue with expenditure to make sure they could keep on their operations or not.

We divided our model into five modules that are described as following:

3.2.1 Life cycle stage module

This module displays a life cycle in which a person is born, grows up, gets married, gets old and passes away. To make the simulation more reasonable, we set the initial population according to the real population cen-

sus data in 2000. And after each step, people will add one year to their ages.

3.2.2 Location choice module

According to procedure for opening a DC centers in Japan the DC center agents will follow the decision tree shown in figure 2 to make locations for building centers. To obtain its objective, A DC center agent has to specify locations of the elderly people who want to visit DC centers at each cell firstly. Then, it will calculate a demand for DC centers at each cell in CCA and UPA. The demand indicates the number of elderly people who want to visit DC centers in an area within a radius of certain maximum service distance. After that, the DC center agent compares the demand at each cell with a threshold in order to set that location as a potential site. The threshold indicates a minimum demand of 15 elderly people that DC center agent can build a DC center at one cell for serving elderly people. The following equation was used for calculating the demand at one cell:

$$D_j = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i \times y_i \quad (1)$$

Subject to $y_i = 0$ if $d_{ij} > S_{\max}$
 $y_i = 1$ if $d_{ij} < S_{\max}$

Where: D_j : Demand at cell j ; a_i : Number of elderly people who want to visit a DC center at cell i ; d_{ij} : Distance between cell i and cell j ; S_{\max} : Maximum service distance.

Next, DC center agent will also evaluate the appropriateness that is governed by some factors, such as different land use zones, distance from hospital at each location. In another word, it calculates the probability that indicates whether one cell will be chosen for building a DC center or not. In this paper, we applied logistic regression¹⁰⁾ (Long et al, 2008) in order to calculate the probability that is represented as following equations:

$$S_{ij} = S_0 + \beta_1 \times f_zone1 + \beta_2 \times f_zone2 + \beta_3 \times f_zone3 + \beta_4 \times f_zone4 + \beta_5 \times f_zone5 \quad (2)$$

$$+ \beta_6 \times f_zone6 + \beta_7 \times f_zone7 + \beta_8 \times f_zone8 + \beta_9 \times f_center + \beta_{10} \times f_hospital \quad (3)$$

$$P_g^t = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(S_{ij} - p_{g, \max})}} \quad (4)$$

$$p_f = e^{a \times (-1 + (p_g / p_{g, \max}))} \quad (4)$$

Where: S_{ij} : suitability of cell (ij) at time t ; S_0 : is constant that is one of [-3;3]; p_g^t : is initial probability at time t ; $p_{g, \max}^t$: is maximum value of p_g during each step; β_1, β_2, \dots : are coefficients in logistic regression; f_zone1, f_zone2, \dots : are spatial features of cell (ij); a : is diffusion coefficient which is in the range of (1-10); p_{av} : is the average probability between cell (ij) and its four-cell neighbors; p_f : is the final probability

Finally, the DC center agent will choose a potential site that has the highest value of probability as a location for DC center.

3.2.3 Care levels decision module

The interactions between household agents and local government agent are represented in this module. Government agent makes a decision on specifying care levels for elderly agents basing on elderly people’s health status (shown in figure 4).

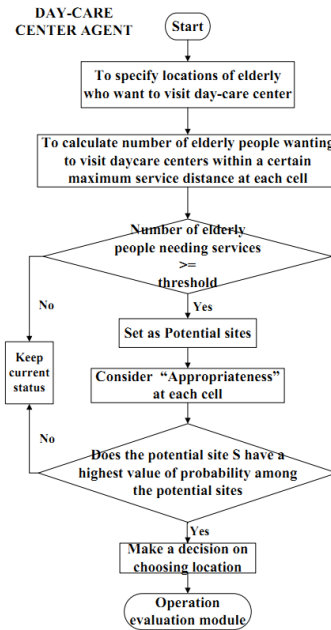


Fig. 2. Decision tree for choosing locations of DC centers

Meal (1)
1.1; 3.4; 5.0; 6.8; 7.5; 8.8; 10.1; 11.1; 11.2; 13.7; 15.4; 18.6; 21.6; 25.3; 34.2; 34.9; 45.4; 56.0; 65.9; 71.4
Excretion (2)
0.2; 2.0; 2.9; 4.7; 8.2; 8.3 ; 11.1; 11.6 ; 15.1 ; 16.1; 17.4; 18.4; 19.1; 19.7; 19.8; 20.1; 20.5; 20.8; 21.0; 21.5; 21.7; 22.1; 22.6; 22.9; 23.9; 24.0; 24.1; 24.5; 25.9; 28.0
Movement (3)
0.4; 2.0; 3.8; 4.1; 4.6; 4.7; 7.3; 7.6; 7.8; 8.2; 8.8; 10.2; 10.4; 11.1; 11.4; 12.6; 14.2; 14.6; 15.2; 16.3; 17.2; 17.6; 17.8; 19.0; 19.1; 19.2; 19.3; 20.5; 20.8; 21.4;
Keep clean (4)
1.2; 3.0; 3.9; 5.8; 6.0; 6.7; 7.6; 8.0; 9.8; 10.5; 10.8; 11.4; 11.6; 13.0; 13.6; 14.8; 15.1; 15.4; 15.5; 15.6; 15.8; 16.4; 17.1; 17.3; 17.5; 17.6; 17.7; 18.1; 18.5; 20.4; 20.5; 21.0; 23.1; 23.3; 24.3;
Indirect life care (5)
0.4 ; 1.3; 1.7; 2.2; 2.7; 2.8; 3.0; 3.2; 3.6; 4.2; 4.5; 4.6; 4.7; 4.9; 5.1; 5.4 ; 5.7; 5.8; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.7; 7.1; 7.2; 7.7; 7.8; 8.0; 8.2; 9.4; 10.9; 11.3;
Behaviors on mental and physical health (6)
5.8; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 6.7; 7.5; 7.6; 8.1; 8.7; 9.0; 10.1; 10.5; 10.6; 10.8; 16.1; 21.2;
Behaviors on training function (7)
0.5; 1.1; 1.6; 1.9; 2.0; 2.2; 2.5; 3.2; 3.3; 3.9; 4.0; 4.1; 4.5; 4.6; 5.5; 5.7; 6.0; 6.1; 6.5; 7.0; 7.1; 7.6; 7.8; 8.9; 10.4; 10.5; 11.6; 15.4;
Behaviors on medical care (8)
1.0; 2.0; 2.6; 2.9; 3.0; 3.2; 3.3; 3.9; 5.3; 4.2; 4.4; 4.5; 5.1; 5.9; 6.0; 6.1; 6.5; 7.0; 7.4; 8.3; 9.2; 10.1; 14.8; 28.0; 29.0; 32.0; 33.7; 37.2;

Fig. 3. Determinants governing Elderly people’s Health status

Firstly, each elderly agent who wants to visit the DC centers will choose one of scores from each determinant randomly (shown in figure 3). Then, the government agent calculates a health score for each elderly agent by summing all the scores that elderly people have chosen. Finally, the government agent will compare the health scores with a classification table of care levels (shown in table 1) in order to specify care levels for elderly people.

Table. 1. Care levels classified by Japanese Government ⁸⁾

	Support 1 (S1)	Support 2 (S2)	Care 1 (C1)	Care 2 (C2)	Care 3 (C3)	Care 4 (C4)	Care 5 (C5)
$T=1+\dots+8$	$25 \leq T < 32$	$32 \leq T < 40$	$40 \leq T < 50$	$50 \leq T < 70$	$70 \leq T < 90$	$90 \leq T < 110$	$T \geq 110$

3.2.4 DC center choice module

In this module, the elderly agents will follow a decision tree shown in figure 5 to display their behaviors on choosing the DC centers to visit. We assumed that a distance from an elderly agent's house to DC centers is considered as a single criterion for choosing a DC center to visit. In another word, they will choose the nearest center to visit with a certain number of times per week according to different care levels. However, they will be asked to move to another center randomly if the first chosen center is full of people. Besides that, this module also represents interactions between elderly agents. An elderly agent who has visited a DC center will introduce that center to his neighbors and ask them to visit the DC center with him. In our model, the elderly agents living in an area within a radius of 100 m, corresponding 2 cells in the model, from the houses of elderly agents visited DC centers are considered as neighbors of the elderly agents who visited DC centers. Furthermore, the probability for visiting DC centers that elderly people who will be asked to visit a DC center is set randomly.

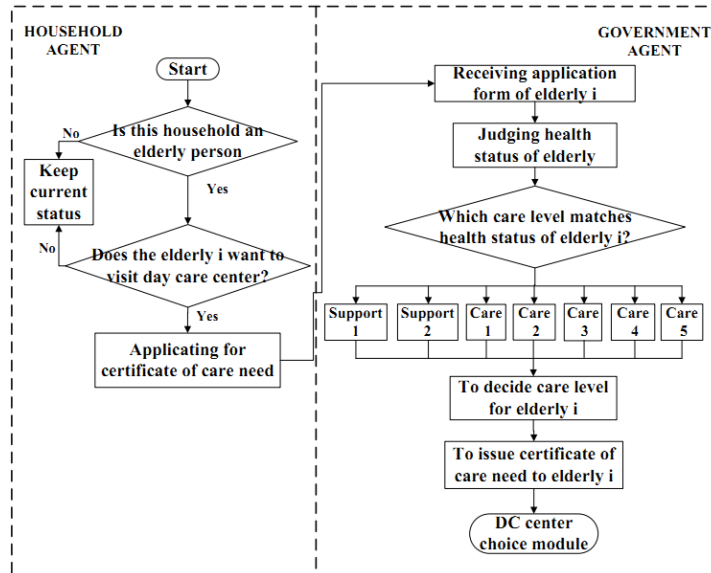


Fig. 4. Decision tree for deciding care levels

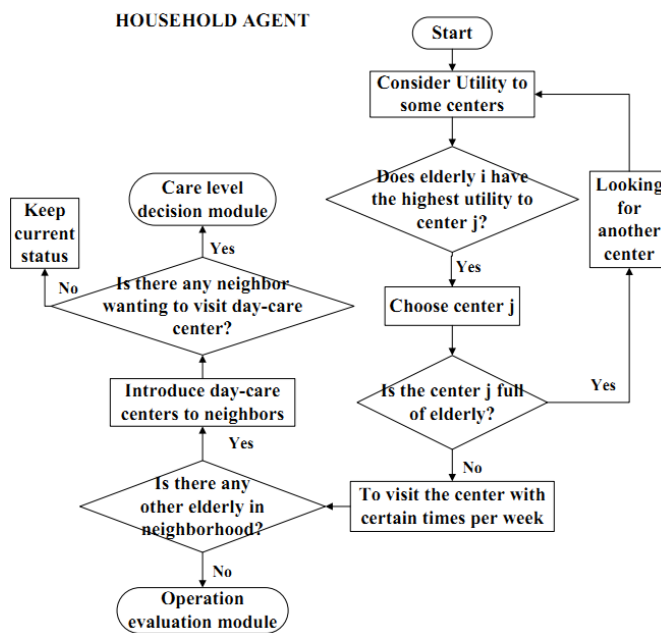


Fig. 5. Decision tree for choosing DC centers

3.2.5 Operation evaluation module

The module shows the behaviors of DC center agents on recording number of elderly agents who have visited the DC centers according to different care levels. They also calculate their revenue for one year and compare the revenue to their expenditure in order to make sure the DC centers could keep on their operation or not. If the revenue of a DC center is lower than its expenditure, this center will go bankrupt and be eliminated from urban space. We also suggested an equation for calculating the revenue as following:

$$R = \sum_{i=1}^7 N_i \times P_i \times F_i \times ra \times 52 \tag{5}$$

Where: R : Revenue for one year; N_i : Number of elderly people according to care levels has visited a DC center; P_i : is the price that is different according care levels; F_i : is frequency indicating number of times elderly people visited a DC center ; 52 : means the number of weeks in a year; ra : is the price ratio among three kinds of DC centers and ra has 3 different values, such as $ra=1; ra=1.1; ra=1.5; i = [1; 7]$ corresponds to 7 care levels that are Support 1(S1), Support 2 (S2), Care 1 (C1), Care 2 (C2), Care 3 (C3), Care 4 (C4) and Care 5 (C5).

3.3 Simulation process and simulated results

3.3.1 Data input

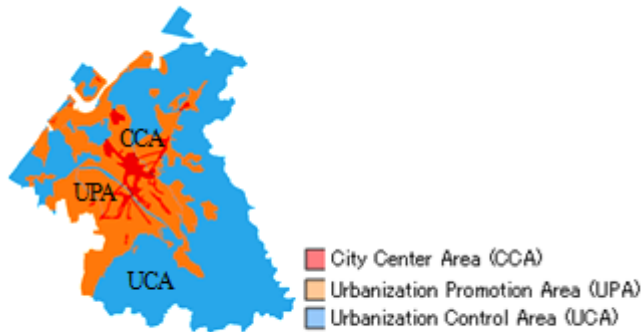


Fig. 6. Urban planning area inputted in NetLogo in 1985

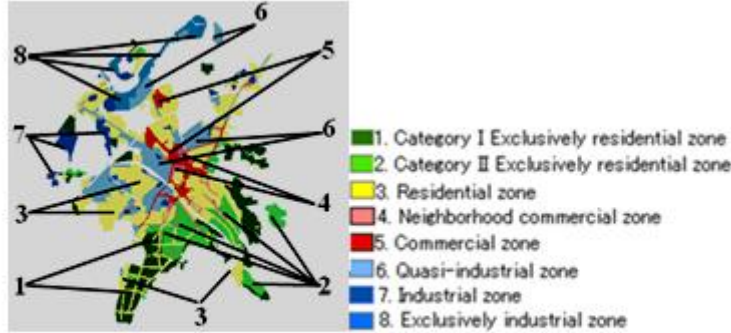


Fig. 7. Land use zones inputted in NetLogo in 1985

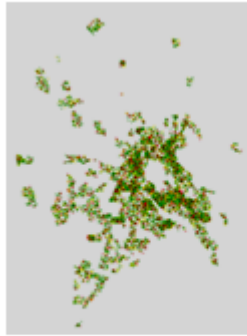


Fig. 8. Distribution of 6285 households created in NetLogo

For data preparation, we used ArcGIS software to compile and convert some GIS data on household distribution, urban area, and land use zones from vector data to ASC files. Then, these ASC files were inputted into NetLogo software (figures 6, 7, and 8). We just considered 6825 households (figure 8) who live in Downtown (CCA), Urbanization Promotion Area (UPA), Urbanization Control Area (UCA) for running the simulation because it takes a lot of time if we use all number of households.

Besides that, to set the initial input data, we also used the same ratio of elderly agents comparing to total population and the same ratio of elderly people who visited the DC centers comparing to number of elderly people as those of the real data in 2000 that are 0.16 and 0.107 respectively. So, we have 1098 elderly agents including 117 elderly agents who visited the DC centers at the initial step.

Furthermore, we also suggested an equation to calculate number of new DC centers that will be built at each tick as follows:

$$N_{newDC} = \frac{N_{Visited-Elderly}}{Ca_{av}} - N_{exDC} \tag{6}$$

Where: N_{newDC} : The number of new DC centers; $N_{Visited-Elderly}$: The number of elderly agents who want to visit DC centers
 Ca_{av} : The average capacity among DC centers; N_{exDC} : The number of existing DC centers

Moreover, as mentioned in section 3.1, we divided the DC centers into 3 kinds with different capacities. Besides that, the expenditure of each DC center is different according to different capacities. In our case, we set the expenditures as 50% of revenue of a year that are calculated basing on an average price and average frequency among seven care levels. For more detail, DC centers with capacities of 15 (in color of blue), 20 (in color of yellow) and 25 (in color of red) have the expenditures as 637,200; 849,600 and 1,062,000 yen respectively.

3.3.2. Simulated results

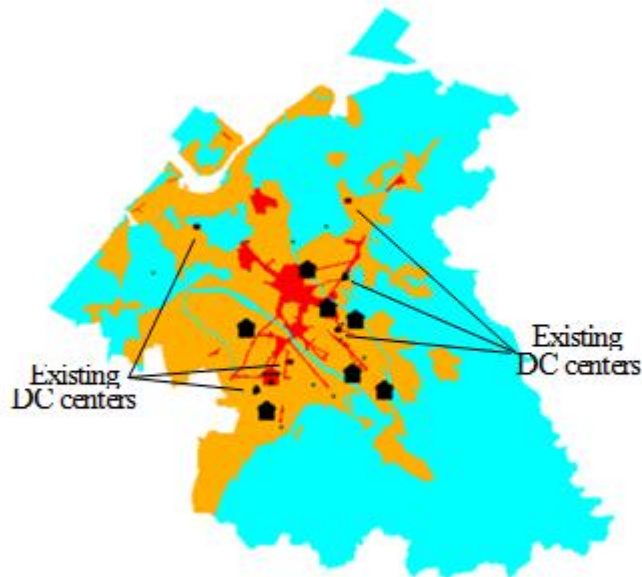


Fig. 9. Distribution of DC centers in 2010

We ran the simulation for 30 ticks that correspond 30 years from 2000 to 2030 and the simulation was repeated 30 times. It took 45 hours for 1 time and 1350 hours for obtaining all the simulation results. In this paper, we will represent the simulation results from the year of 2000 to 2010 firstly, and then validate the results by using the real census dataset in 2010. Finally, we will show some predictions on the locations and number of DC centers and number of elderly people who visited DC centers in 2030.

The figure 9 shows the simulation result on distribution of DC centers in 2010. Symbols with small houses indicate the existing DC centers that have the same coordinates with the real ones. And symbols with big houses represent the new DC centers. According to results from 30 times, there are 14 DC centers in average (figure 10) that include 12 centers, 86% located in residential areas (Re), one, 7% in commercial area (Co) and one, 7% in industrial areas(In) (figure 11), which are similar to real percentage

68%, 6% and 24% in those land use zones respectively in the entire Kanazawa city. Because we only focus

UCA, UPA and CCA, the number of DC centers located in Industrial area is smaller than the real percentage.

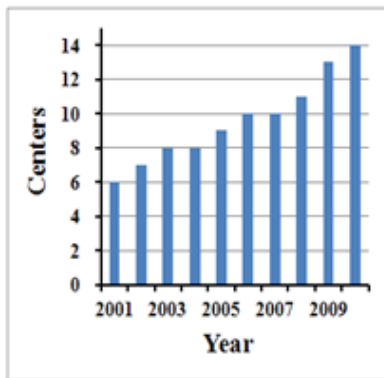


Fig. 10 Average number of DC centers

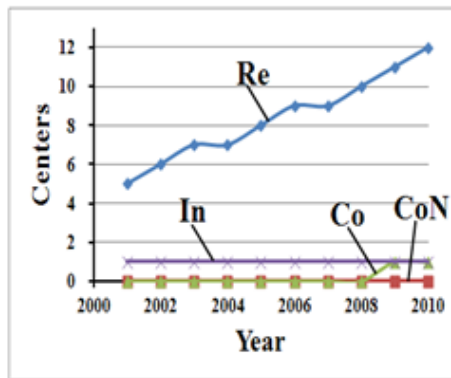


Fig. 11 Number DC centers in different land use zones

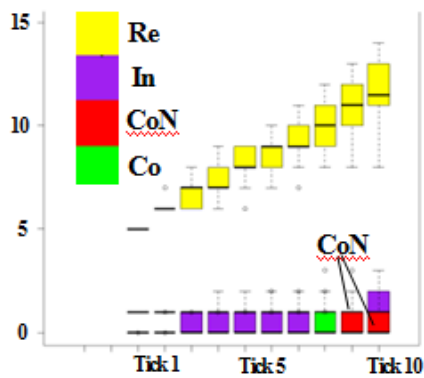


Fig. 12 DC centers in different land use zones from 30 times of simulation

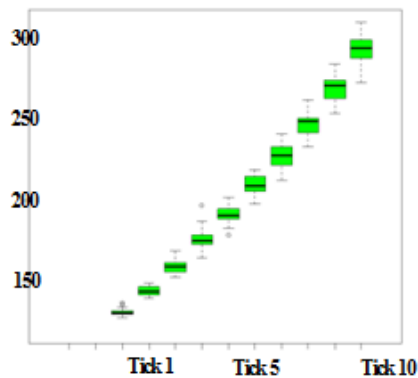


Fig. 13 Elderly people visited DC centers from 30 times of simulation

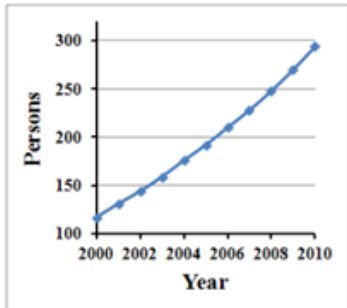


Fig. 14 Elderly people visited DC centers

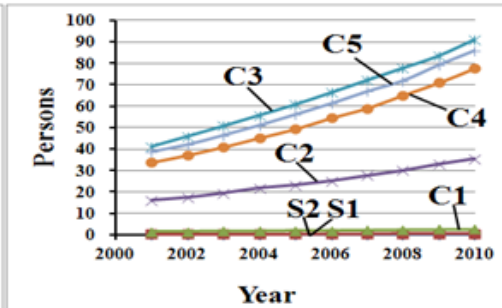


Fig. 15 Elderly people visited DC centers with different care levels

Table 2. Comparing simulated results and real data

	Living area	Number of elderly visited DC centers		Increase in Elderly visited DC centers (times)
		2000	2010	
Census data 177,686 households	Kanazawa City	7795	18072	2.3
Simulated data 6825 households	CCA, UPA, UCA	117	294	2.5

Moreover, we also used R software to draw box-plot that represents the results from 30 times of simulation (figure 12, 13). And the number of DC centers from simulation results makes up about 10% of the real ones that are 138 centers in 2010¹²⁾.

Figures 14, 15, and 16 show the results on the number of elderly people who visited DC centers and number of elderly people who visited DC centers with different care levels. Moreover, the table 2 displays a comparison between the simulated results and the census data¹³⁾ on number of elderly agents who visited DC centers. The times of increase in number of elderly people who visited DC centers are nearly the same between real data and simulated results that are 2.3 and 2.5 respectively.

Furthermore, we also implemented simulation on the locations of DC centers and predicted number of visited elderly people in 2030 that are indicated as following figures 16-20. According to the simulated results, there are 60 DC centers and 1252 elderly agents who visited DC centers. Besides that, number of DC centers and number of elderly people who visited DC centers in 2030 increased 4.3 and 4.2 times respectively compar-

ing to those in 2010. However, the number of elderly people with care levels of Support 1 (S1), Support (S2) and care level 1 (C1) are nearly zero as shown in the figures 15 and 19, which is because we have no dataset of health statuses of elderly people and simulate the health status of each elderly person by a random process.

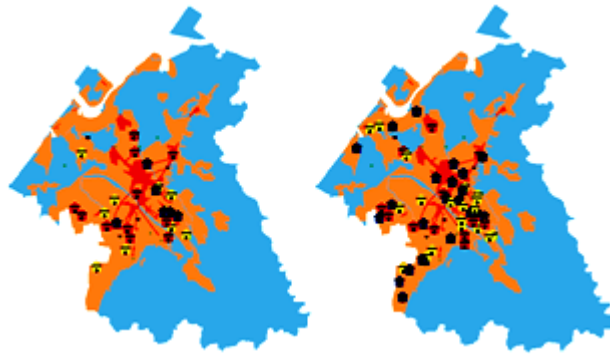


Fig. 16 Distribution of DC centers in 2020 and 2030

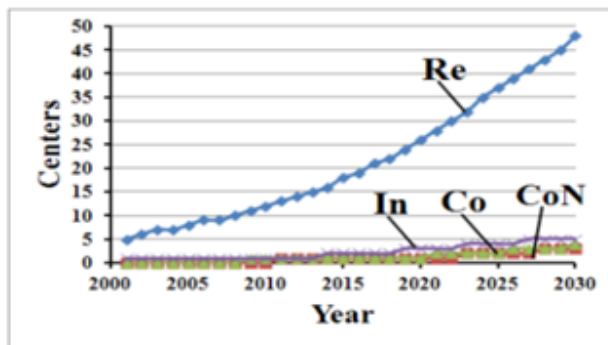


Fig. 17 DC centers in different land use zones

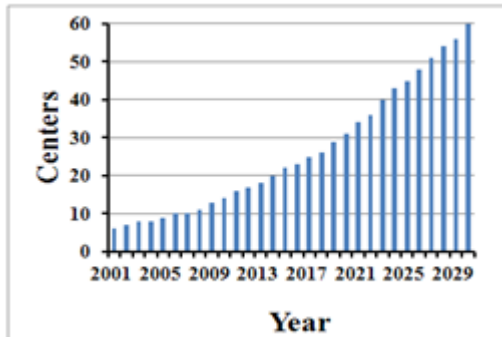


Fig. 18 Number of DC centers until 2030

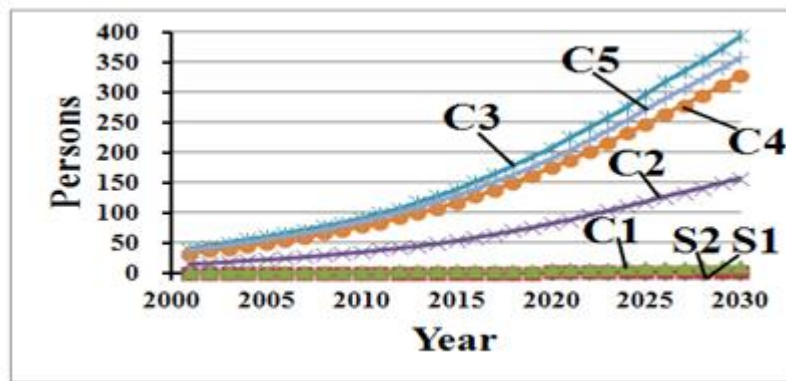


Fig. 19 Elderly people visited DC centers with different care levels until 2030

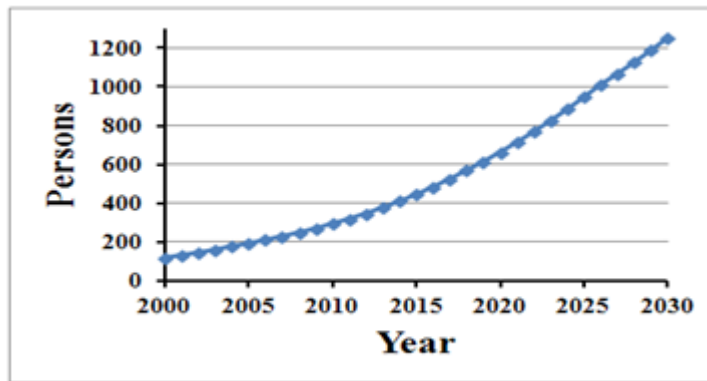


Fig. 20 Elderly people visited DC centers until 2030

4. Discussion and further research

In this paper, an agent-based model for simulating locations of DC centers is developed and illustrated. The model integrated 3 different modules so that it can predict future age structure of population in Kanazawa city and its corresponded demand for daycare centers. Moreover, the distribution of these centers in different urban areas can also be simulated. From this viewpoint, comparing with traditional statistic analysis this research can provide planners who are making plans for daycare center with visualized reference. But in planning practice, to what extent this research can help planners and policy-makers to consider plan strategies for daycare centers is another topic we should consider in future.

However, our work still has limits that we have no dataset of health statues of elderly people and simulation of the health status of each elderly person is conducted by a random process. In the future we should try to input real dataset of heal statue to predict the detailed demand of elderly people for different care levels. Furthermore, we should increase the accuracy of our model to parcel scale so that we can validate the location of DC centers by coordinates.

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