Improved Direct Measurement of the Parity-Violation Parameter $A_b$ Using a Mass Tag and Momentum-Weighted Track Charge


(SLD Collaboration)
We present an improved direct measurement of the parity-violation parameter $A_b$ in the $Z$ boson–$b$-quark coupling using a self-calibrating track-charge technique applied to a sample enriched in $Z \to b \bar{b}$ events via the topological reconstruction of the $B$ hadron mass. Manipulation of the Stanford Linear Collider electron-beam polarization permits the measurement of $A_b$ to be made independently of other $Z$-pole coupling parameters. From the 1996–1998 sample of 400 000 hadronic $Z$ decays, produced with an average beam polarization of 73.4%, we find $A_b = 0.906 \pm 0.022$ (stat) $\pm 0.023$ (syst).

Measurements of $b$-quark production asymmetries at the $Z^0$ pole determine the extent of parity violation in the $Zb\bar{b}$ coupling. At the Born level, the differential cross section for the process $e^+e^- \to Z^0 \to b\bar{b}$ can be expressed as a function of the polar angle $\theta$ of the $b$ quark relative to the electron-beam direction,

$$
\alpha^b(\cos\theta) \equiv \frac{d\sigma^b}{d\cos\theta} \propto (1 - A_e P_e)(1 + \cos^2\theta) + 2A_b(A_e - P_e) \cos\theta,
$$

where $P_e$ is the longitudinal polarization of the electron beam ($P_e > 0$ for a predominantly right-handed polarized beam). The parameter $A_j = 2v_j a_j/(v_j^2 + a_j^2)$, where $v_j$ ($a_j$) is the vector (axial vector) coupling of the fermion $f$ to the $Z^0$ boson, with $f = e$ or $b$, expresses the extent of parity violation in the $Zf\bar{f}$ coupling.

From the conventional forward-backward asymmetries formed with an unpolarized electron beam ($P_e = 0$), such as that used by the CERN Large Electron-Positron Collider (LEP) experiments, only the product $A_e A_b$ of parity-violation parameters can be measured [1]. With a longitudinally polarized electron beam, however, it is possible to measure $A_b$ independently of $A_e$ by fitting simultaneously to the differential cross sections of Eq. (1) formed separately for predominantly left- and right-handed beams. The resulting direct measurement of $A_b$ is largely independent of propagator effects that modify the effective weak mixing angle and thus is complementary to other electroweak asymmetry measurements performed at the $Z^0$ pole.

In this Letter, we present a measurement of $A_b$ based on the use of an inclusive vertex mass tag (improved relative to that of previous publications due to the use of an upgraded vertex detector) to select $Z \to b\bar{b}$ events and the net momentum-weighted track charge [2] to identify the charge of the underlying quark. This result, incorporating data collected during the 1996–1998 runs of the Stanford Linear Collider (SLC), is over twice as precise as that of our previous publication [3], which was based on data from 1993–1995.

The operation of the SLC with a polarized electron beam has been described elsewhere [4]. During the 1996–1998 run, the SLC Large Detector (SLD) [5] recorded an integrated luminosity of 14.0 $pb^{-1}$, at a mean center-of-mass energy of 91.24 GeV, and with a luminosity-weighted mean electron-beam polarization of $|P_e| = 0.734 \pm 0.004$ [6]. The 1996–1998 run of the SLD detector incorporated the upgraded VXD3 CCD pixel vertex detector [7], which featured a greater coverage in both $\phi$ and $z$ extent of parity violation in the $Zf\bar{f}$ interaction. The parameter $\alpha^b(\cos\theta)$ is largely independent of propagator effects that modify the effective weak mixing angle and thus is complementary to other electroweak asymmetry measurements performed at the $Z^0$ pole.

PACS numbers: 13.20.Dh, 11.30.Er, 12.15.Ji, 14.65.Fy

DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevLett.90.141804

141804-2
sample of 36,936 candidate \(Z^0 \to b\bar{b}\) decays. The purity (97\%) and efficiency (77\%) of this sample are calculated from the data by comparing the rates for finding a high mass vertex in either a single or both hemispheres, where the two hemispheres are defined relative to the plane perpendicular to the thrust axis. This procedure assumes \textit{a priori} knowledge of the small udsc tagging efficiency, as well as the size of interhemisphere correlations, both of which are taken from Monte Carlo (MC) simulation. This procedure also assumes knowledge of the \(Z \to c\bar{c}\) and \(Z \to b\bar{b}\) branching fractions, which are assigned their standard model values of 0.172 and 0.216, respectively.

We construct a signed thrust axis \(\hat{T}\), which provides an estimate of the direction of the negatively charged \(b\) quark, as follows. Using all track-charge quality tracks, as defined in Ref. [11], we form the track-direction-signed \((Q)\) and unsigned \((Q_+)\) momentum-weighted track-charge sums

\[
Q = - \sum_{\text{tracks}} q_j \cdot \text{sgn}(\hat{p}_j \cdot \hat{T}) |(\hat{p}_j \cdot \hat{T})|^{\kappa},
\]

\[
Q_+ = \sum_{\text{tracks}} q_j |(\hat{p}_j \cdot \hat{T})|^{\kappa},
\]

where \(q_j\) and \(\hat{p}_j\) are the charge and momentum of track \(j\), respectively. \(\hat{T}\) is chosen as the unit vector parallel to the thrust axis that renders \(Q > 0\). We use \(\kappa = 0.5\) to maximize the analyzing power of the thrust algorithm for \(Z^0 \to b\bar{b}\) events, resulting in a correct-assignment probability of 70\%. Figure 1 shows the \(T_z = \cos\theta_{\text{thrust}}\) momentum distribution of the \(b\)-enriched sample separately for left- and right-handed electron beams. Clear forward-backward asymmetries are observed, with respective signs as expected from the cross-section formula in Eq. (1).

The value of \(A_b\) is extracted via a maximum likelihood fit to the differential cross section [see Eq. (1)]

\[
\rho_i(A_b) = (1 - A_e P_i^e)[1 + (T_z^i)^2] + 2(A_e - P_i^e)T_z^i[A_b f_b^i(2P_b^i - 1)(1 - \Delta_{QCD,b}^i) + A_c f_c^i(2P_c^i - 1)(1 - \Delta_{QCD,c}^i)]
\]

\[
+ A_{bckg}^i(1 - f_b^i - f_c^i)(2P_{bckg}^i - 1),
\]

where \(P_i^e\) is the signed polarization of the electron beam for event \(i\), \(f_b^i\) is the probability that the event is a \(Z^0 \to b\bar{b}(c\bar{c})\) decay (parametrized as a function of the secondary vertex mass), and \(\Delta_{QCD,b,c}^i\) are final-state QCD corrections, to be discussed below. \(A_{bckg}^i\) is the estimated asymmetry of residual \(u\bar{u}, d\bar{d}\), and \(s\bar{s}\) final states. The parameters \(p\) are estimates of the probability that the sign of \(Q\) accurately reflects the charge of the respective underlying quark, and are functions of \(|Q|\), as well as the secondary vertex mass and \(|T_z|\).

As in our previous publication [3], we measure \(p_b\) directly from the data [12]. Defining \(Q_b\) \((Q_{\bar{T}})\) to be the track-direction-unsigned momentum-weighted track-charge sum for the thrust hemisphere containing the \(b\) \((\bar{b})\) quark, the quantities

\[
Q_{\text{sum}} = Q_b + Q_{\bar{T}}, \quad Q_{\text{dif}} = Q_b - Q_{\bar{T}},
\]

may be related to the experimental observables defined in Eqs. (2) and (3), respectively: \(|Q_{\text{dif}}| = |Q|\) and \(Q_{\text{sum}} = Q_+\). Our MC simulation indicates that the \(Q_b\) and \(Q_{\bar{T}}\) distributions are approximately Gaussian. In this limit [12],

\[
p_b(|Q|) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-\alpha_b|Q|}},
\]

with

\[
\alpha_b = \frac{2q_0^\text{dif}}{\sigma_\text{dif}^2} = \frac{2\sqrt{\langle |Q_{\text{dif}}|^2 \rangle} - \sigma_\text{dif}^2}{\sigma_\text{dif}^2},
\]

where \(q_0^\text{dif}\) and \(\sigma_\text{dif}\) are the mean and width, respectively, of the Gaussian \(Q_{\text{dif}}\) distribution. The parameter \(\alpha_b\), whose magnitude depends upon the separation between the \(b\) and \(\bar{b}\) track-sum distributions via the observable \(\langle |Q_{\text{dif}}|^2 \rangle\), provides a measure of the analyzing power of the \(b\)-quark direction estimator \(T\). Figure 2 compares the distributions of the observable combinations \(|Q_{\text{dif}}|\) and \(Q_+\) between data and MC.

In the absence of a correlation between \(Q_b\) and \(Q_{\bar{T}}\), \(\sigma_\text{dif}^2 = \sigma_{\text{sum}}^2\), where \(\sigma_{\text{sum}}\) is the observed width of the \(Q_+\) distribution. Thus \(\alpha_b\) can be derived from experimental

\[FIG. 1.\] Polar angle distributions for track-charge-signed \(Z \to b\bar{b}\) candidates, separately for left- and right-handed electron beams. The shaded histogram represents the contribution from a non-\(b\bar{b}\) background, estimated as described in the text. The analysis employs a cut of \(|\cos\theta| < 0.7\).
observables. In the presence of a correlation, \( \sigma_{\text{diff}} = (1 + \lambda)\sigma_{\text{sum}} \), where \( \lambda \) characterizes the strength of the correlation, which can be determined from the MC simulation. For JETSET 7.4 [13] with parton shower evolution, string fragmentation, and full detector simulation, \( \lambda \) is found to be 0.040. The effects of light-flavor contamination are taken into account by adjusting the observed widths \( \sigma_{\text{sum}}^2 \) and \( \langle |Q_{\text{diff}}|^2 \rangle \), using the magnitude and width of the light-flavor and \( c\bar{c} \) contributions estimated from the MC. This correction increases the value of \( \alpha_b \) by 2\% to 0.2944 \pm 0.0078, bringing it into good agreement with the value of 0.2949 \pm 0.0007 extracted from the \( Z \rightarrow bb \) simulation.

Final-state gluon radiation reduces the observed asymmetry from its Born-level value. This effect is incorporated in our analysis by applying a correction \( \Delta_{\text{QCD}}(\cos \theta) \) to the likelihood function [Eq. (4)]. Calculation of the quantity \( \Delta_{\text{QCD}} \) has been performed by several groups [14].

For an unbiased sample of \( bb \) events, correcting for final-state gluon radiation increases the measured asymmetry by \( \sim 3\% \). However, QCD radiative effects are mitigated by the use of the thrust axis to estimate the \( b \)-quark direction, the \( Z^0 \rightarrow b\bar{b} \) enrichment algorithm, the self-calibration procedure, and the cut on the number of jets. A MC simulation of the analysis chain indicates that these effects can be represented by a \( \Delta_{\text{QCD}}(\cos \theta) \) where \( x_{\text{QCD}} = 0.074 \), such that \( \Delta_{\text{QCD}} = x_{\text{QCD}} \Delta_{\text{QCD}}^{11} \).

Effects due to gluon splitting to \( bb \) and \( c\bar{c} \) have been estimated by rescaling the JETSET simulation production of such quark pairs to current world-average gluon splitting measurements [15], leading to a correction of +0.3\% on the value of \( \alpha_b \). Additional radiative effects, such as those due to initial-state radiation and \( \gamma/Z \) interference, lead to a further correction of \(-0.2\% \) to the measured value of \( \alpha_b \).

While, as described above, the overall tagging efficiency is derived from data, the dependence of the \( b \)-tagging efficiency upon the secondary vertex mass must be estimated from the MC simulation, as must be the charm correct-signing probability \( p_c \). The value of \( p_c \) is set to its standard model value of 0.67, with an uncertainty commensurate with that of \([16]\). The value of \( A_{bc} \) is set to zero, with an uncertainty corresponding to the full physical range \( A_{bc} < 1 \). The resulting value of \( \Delta_{\text{QCD}} \) from the fit is \( \alpha_b = 0.907 \pm 0.022 \) (stat). This result is found to be insensitive to the value of the \( b \)-tag mass cut, and the value of weighting exponent \( \kappa \) used in the definition (2) and (3) of the momentum-weighted track-charge sum.

We have investigated a number of systematic effects which can change the measured value of \( \alpha_b \); these are summarized in Table I. The uncertainty in \( \alpha_b \) due to the statistical uncertainties in \( \langle |Q_{\text{diff}}|^2 \rangle \) and \( \sigma_{\text{sum}}^2 \) corresponds to a 1.6\% uncertainty in \( \alpha_b \). The uncertainty in the hemisphere correlation parameter \( \lambda \) is estimated by varying fragmentation parameters within JETSET 7.4, and by comparison with the HERWIG 5.7 [18] fragmentation model. The resulting uncertainty in \( \alpha_b \) is 1.4\%. The sensitivity of the result to the shape of the underlying \( Q_{\text{b}} \) distribution is tested by generating various triangular distributions as well as double Gaussian distributions with offset means. The test distributions are constrained to yield a \( Q_{\text{sum}} \) distribution consistent with data, and the total uncertainty is found to be 0.8\%. In addition, while the mean value of the self-calibration parameter \( \alpha_b \) is constrained by the data, it has a \( \cos \theta \) dependence due to the falloff of the tracking efficiency at high \( |\cos \theta| \) which must be

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error source</th>
<th>Variation</th>
<th>( \delta \alpha_b/\alpha_b )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \alpha_b ) statistics</td>
<td>( \pm 1\sigma )</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \lambda_b ) correlation</td>
<td>JETSET, HERWIG</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( p(Q_{\text{b}}) ) shape</td>
<td>Different shapes</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \cos \theta ) shape of ( \alpha_b )</td>
<td>MC shape vs flat</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light flavor</td>
<td>50% of correction</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Procedure from [17]</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tag composition</td>
<td>Compare tracking</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detector modeling</td>
<td>Efficiency corrections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beam polarization</td>
<td>( \pm 0.5% )</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QCD</td>
<td>Full correction</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gluon splitting</td>
<td>Full correction</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( A_c )</td>
<td>0.67 \pm 0.04</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( A_{bc} )</td>
<td>0 \pm 0.50</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
estimated using the simulation, leading to a 0.4% uncertainty in \( A_b \).

The extracted value of \( A_b \) is sensitive to our estimate of the \( Z^0 \to c\bar{c} \) background, which tends to reduce the observed asymmetry due to the positive charge of the underlying \( c \) quark. The uncertainty in the purity estimate of 96.9% ± 0.3% is dominated by the uncertainties in the charm tagging efficiency (\( \epsilon_c = 0.0218 ± 0.0004 \)) and the statistical uncertainty of the bottom tagging efficiency determined from data, leading to a 0.5% uncertainty in \( A_b \). An outline of the charm quark efficiency uncertainty determination can be found in Ref. [17]; the uncertainty is dominated by empirical constraints on charm hadron production rates and on \( K^0 \) production in the decay of charm mesons. Uncertainties in the measured values of \( R_b \) and \( R_c \) contribute, through the tag purity, to uncertainties in \( A_b \) of 0.1% and 0.0%, respectively.

Agreement between the data and MC simulation charged track multiplicity distributions is obtained only after the inclusion of additional ad hoc tracking inefficiency. This random inefficiency was parametrized as a function of total track momentum, and averages 0.4 charged tracks per event, leading to an overall change of +1.3% in \( A_b \). As a check, we employ an alternative approach, matching the efficiency of the linking of the independent CDC and VXD3 track segments between data and MC simulation. This yields a change of +0.5% in \( A_b \); we take the difference of 0.8% as an estimate of the systematic error on the modeling of the tracking efficiency. Combining all systematic uncertainties in quadrature yields a total relative systematic uncertainty of 2.6%.

The extracted value of \( A_b \) depends on a number of model parameters, as follows. Increases by 0.01 in the values of \( A_c, R_b, R_c \), and the per-event rate of \( b\bar{b} \) production via gluon splitting lead to changes in \( A_b \) of +0.0002, −0.0055, +0.0002, and +0.0110, respectively.

In conclusion, we have exploited the highly polarized SLC electron beam and precise vertexing capabilities of the SLD detector to perform a direct measurement of \( A_b = 0.906 ± 0.022(\text{stat}) ± 0.023(\text{syst}) \), from the 1996–1998 SLD data sample. Combined with our previously published result [3] based on the 1993–1995 data sample, we find

\[
A_b = 0.907 ± 0.020(\text{stat}) ± 0.024(\text{syst}), \quad (8)
\]

for the full 1993–1998 data sample. This result is in good agreement with the standard model prediction of 0.935, and represents an improvement of over a factor of 2 in the precision of the determination of \( A_b \) via the use of momentum-weighted track charge.

We thank the staff of the SLAC accelerator department for their outstanding efforts on our behalf. This work was supported by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation, the U.K. Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council, the Istituto Nazionale di Fisica Nucleare of Italy, and the Japan-U.S. Cooperative Research Project on High Energy Physics. This work was supported in part by the Department of Energy Contract No. DE-AC03-76SF00515.