Measurement of the production fraction times branching fraction
\[ f(b \to \Lambda_b) \cdot \mathcal{B}(\Lambda_b \to J/\psi \Lambda) \]


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The study of $b$ hadron decays, in particular $b \to s$ decays, offers good opportunities to search for physics beyond the standard model (BSM). For this reason, these decays have been the subject of intensive experimental \cite{1}\cite{2} and theoretical \cite{3}\cite{4} work. Studies of $b$ baryons at the Fermilab Tevatron Collider and the CERN Large Hadron Collider are a natural extension of these studies which have been mostly performed on $B$ mesons \cite{10}\cite{11}. The experimental knowledge of $b$ baryons is currently limited \cite{14}. For the $\Lambda_b(udb)$, the lightest $b$ baryon, only a few decay channels have been studied, and the uncertainties on its branching fractions are large $\sim$(30–60)%. For higher mass $b$ baryon states, even less information is available. Due to its relative abundance, the $\Lambda_b$ baryon has been used to investigate production and decay properties of heavier $b$ baryons, to search for possible polarization effects \cite{15}, for violation of discrete symmetries in the decay (CP \cite{16} and T \cite{17} violation), and to search for BSM effects \cite{18}. There are several models (PQCD \cite{19}, relativistic and non-relativistic quark models based on factorization approximations \cite{21}\cite{25} are examples) to describe $b$ baryon decays such as $\Lambda_b \to J/\psi\Lambda$. Increasingly precise measurements of $f(\Lambda_b \to J/\psi\Lambda)$ where $f(\Lambda_b \to J/\psi\Lambda)$ is the fraction of $b$ quarks which hadronize to $\Lambda_b$ baryons will allow better tests of these models. Moreover, these measurements could help in the study of $b \to s$ decays such as $\Lambda_b \to \mu^+\mu^-\Lambda$ \cite{22}\cite{27},
which are topologically similar to \( \Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda \), where \( J/\psi \) decays to dimuons.

This Letter reports an improved measurement with respect to the previous Tevatron result \(^{28}\) of the production fraction multiplied by the branching fraction of the \( \Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda \) decay relative to that of the decay \( B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K_S^0 \). From this measurement we can obtain \( f(b \rightarrow \Lambda_b) \cdot B(\Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda) \) with significantly improved precision compared to the current world average \(^{14}\). The \( J/\psi, \Lambda \), and \( K_S^0 \) are reconstructed in the \( \mu^+\mu^- \), \( \pi^+\pi^- \), and \( \pi^+\pi^- \) modes, respectively. Throughout this Letter, the appearance of a specific charge state also implies its charge conjugate. The study is performed using 6.1 fb\(^{-1}\) of \( p\bar{p} \) collisions collected with the D0 detector between 2002–2009 at \( \sqrt{s} = 1.96 \) TeV at the Fermilab Tevatron Collider.

A detailed description of the D0 detector can be found in \(^{29}\). The components most relevant to this analysis are the central tracking system and the muon spectrometer. The central tracking system consists of a silicon microstrip tracker (SMT) and a central fiber tracker (CFT) that are surrounded by a 2 T superconducting solenoid. The SMT is optimized for tracking and vertexing for the pseudorapidity region \(|\eta| < 3.0\) (where \( \eta = -\ln[\tan(\theta/2)] \) and \( \theta \) is the polar angle), while the CFT has coverage for \(|\eta| < 2.0\). Liquid-argon and uranium calorimeters in a central and two end-cap cryostats cover the pseudorapidity region \(|\eta| < 4.2\). The muon spectrometer is located outside the calorimeter and covers \(|\eta| < 2.0\). It comprises a layer of drift tubes and scintillator trigger counters in front of 1.8 T iron toroids followed by two similar layers after the toroids.

We closely follow the data selection for \( J/\psi \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^- \), \( \Lambda \rightarrow p\pi^- \) and \( K_S^0 \rightarrow \pi^+\pi^- \) used in the measurement \(^{30}\) of the ratio of the lifetimes, \( \tau(\Lambda_b)/\tau(B^0) \), that used the same decay products of the \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \). Events satisfying muon or dimuon triggers are used. At least one \( p\bar{p} \) interaction vertex must be identified in each event, determined by minimizing a \( \chi^2 \) function that depends on all reconstructed tracks in the event and a term that represents the average beam position constraint. We begin by searching for \( J/\psi \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^- \) decays reconstructed from two oppositely charged muons that have a common vertex with a \( \chi^2 \) probability greater than 1\%.

The \( \Lambda_b (B^0) \) is reconstructed by performing a constrained fit to a common vertex for the \( \Lambda (K_S^0) \) candidate and the two muon tracks, with the muons constrained to the nominal \( J/\psi \) mass of 3.097 GeV/c\(^2\) \(^{14}\). The \( \rho_T \) of the \( \Lambda_b \) or \( B^0 \) candidate is required to be greater than 5 GeV/c. The invariant mass of the \( J/\psi \) and the two additional tracks is required to be within the range 5.0–6.2 GeV/c\(^2\) for \( \Lambda_b \) candidates and within 4.8–5.8 GeV/c\(^2\) for \( B^0 \) candidates.

To determine the final selection criteria, we maximize \( N_S/\sqrt{N_S+N_B} \), where \( N_S \) is the number of signal (\( \Lambda_b \) or \( B^0 \)) candidates determined by Monte Carlo and \( N_B \) is the number of background candidates estimated by using data events in the sidebands of the expected signal. For the Monte Carlo, we use \textsc{pythia} \(^{31}\) and \textsc{evtgen} \(^{32}\) for the production and decay of the simulated particles, respectively, and \textsc{geant3} \(^{33}\) to simulate detector effects. As a result of this optimization, for the \( \Lambda (K_S^0) \) we require the transverse decay length to be greater than 0.8 (0.4) cm, the \( \rho_T \) to be greater than 1.6 (1.0) GeV/c\(^2\) and the significance of its transverse proper decay length (transverse decay length corrected by the boost in the transverse plane) to be greater than 4.0 (9.0). For the \( \Lambda_b (B^0) \) candidate, the significance of the proper decay length is required to be greater than 2.0 (3.0). In addition, the \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) vertices must be well reconstructed.

A track pair can be simultaneously identified as both \( \Lambda \) and \( K_S^0 \) due to different mass assignments to the same tracks. Events containing such track pair ambiguities are removed. Finally, if more than one candidate is found in the event, the candidate with the best vertex \( \chi^2 \) probability is selected as the \( \Lambda_b (B^0) \).

The invariant mass distributions of the final \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) candidates passing our selection criteria are shown in Fig. \(^{1}\). To extract the yields of the observed \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) hadrons, we perform an unbinned likelihood fit to each
mass distribution assuming a double Gaussian function for signal and a second order polynomial distribution for background. The fits yield \( N_{\Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda} = 314 \pm 29 \) events and \( N_{B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S} = 2335 \pm 73 \) events.

The relative production fraction times branching fraction for \( \Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda \) decays to that of \( B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S \) decays is given by

\[
\sigma_{\text{rel}} = \frac{\epsilon (b \rightarrow \Lambda_b) \cdot B(\Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda)}{\epsilon (b \rightarrow B^0) \cdot B(B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S)} = \frac{N_{\Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda} \cdot B(K^0_S \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-) / B(\Lambda \rightarrow p \pi^-)}{N_{B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S} \cdot B(\Lambda \rightarrow p \pi^-)} \cdot \epsilon.
\]

Here, \( \epsilon = \epsilon_{B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S} / \epsilon_{\Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda} \) is the relative detection efficiency of \( B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S \) to \( \Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda \) decays. This relative efficiency is determined from Monte Carlo (MC) simulation to be \( \epsilon = 2.37 \pm 0.05 \) (MC stat.). Using \( B(K^0_S \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-) = 0.6920 \pm 0.0005 \) and \( B(\Lambda \rightarrow p \pi^-) = 0.639 \pm 0.005 \), we obtain \( B(K^0_S \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-) / B(\Lambda \rightarrow p \pi^-) = 1.083 \pm 0.009 \). With these inputs and the reconstructed \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) yields, the relative production fraction is found to be \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} = 0.345 \pm 0.034 \) (stat.) \( \pm 0.003 \) (PDG), where (PDG) denotes the uncertainty due to the inputs from [14].

The sources of systematic uncertainty on \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \) are: (i) uncertainties in the determination of the \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) yields, (ii) the determination of the relative efficiency \( \epsilon \), (iii) contamination from \( \Lambda_b \) in \( B^0 \) and conversely, and (iv) \( \Lambda_b \) polarization effects on the relative efficiency \( \epsilon \). Many other systematic uncertainties common to both \( \Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi \Lambda \) and \( B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi K^0_S \) decays, such as \( b \) quark production, integrated luminosity, trigger and selection efficiencies, cancel in the ratio. The models used for describing signal and background in data are varied, and the resulting changes in the \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) yields introduce a maximum deviation of \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \) from its central value of \( 3.5% \), which is included as systematic uncertainty. The simulation used to estimate \( \epsilon \) uses a phase space model in EVTGEN to decay \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) particles. For \( B^0 \) decays we can also use the SYS_CP (Scalar-Vector-Scalar with CP violation) model [32]. When using this alternative model, we observe a deviation of \( 2.0% \) in \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \). Given the similar topologies of the \( \Lambda_b \rightarrow J/\psi(\mu^+ \mu^-) \Lambda(p \pi^-) \) and \( B^0 \rightarrow J/\psi(\mu^+ \mu^-)K^0_S(\pi^+ \pi^-) \) decays, the \( \Lambda_b \) sample may be contaminated with \( B^0 \) events that pass the \( \Lambda_b \) selection, or vice versa. We quantify this effect in simulation and find a deviation of \( 2.3% \) in \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \), which we include as a systematic uncertainty. Finally, the effect of the unknown polarization and decay parameters of the \( \Lambda_b \) baryon on the relative efficiency is studied following the formalism of [13, 34]. The main effect of the polarization is observed through \( \Theta \), the emission angle of the \( \Lambda \) baryon with respect to the polarization direction in the \( \Lambda_b \) rest frame. This angle follows the distribution \( I(\Theta) \propto 1 + \alpha_{\Lambda_b} P_{\Lambda_b} \cos(\Theta) \), where \( \alpha_{\Lambda_b} \) and \( P_{\Lambda_b} \) are the asymmetry parameter and polarization of the \( \Lambda_b \) baryon. We study the extreme cases \( \alpha_{\Lambda_b} = \pm 1 \) in simulations. The maximum deviation found in \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \) is \( 7.2% \), which is included as a systematic uncertainty due to the unknown \( \Lambda_b \) polarization. All of these systematic uncertainties are combined assuming no correlations, giving a total systematic uncertainty of \( 9.6% \).

We study the stability of the measurement by performing cross checks on the two main inputs to the computation of \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \): the ratio between the numbers of observed \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) candidates extracted from data and the relative efficiency determined from Monte Carlo. We investigate the possibility that the number of \( \Lambda_b \) and \( B^0 \) candidates is affected by time or kinematics dependent changes in the detection and selection efficiency. We divide the data in subsamples and determine the value of \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \) in each individual subsample without observing any significant deviation from the measurement based on the full sample. We split the sample based on different data taking periods, in different \( p_T, \eta \) regions, \( \Lambda \) and \( K^0_S \) decay lengths and also investigated differences between \( \Lambda_b \) and \( \Lambda \) rates. To test for any mismodeling of the detector efficiency that could affect the determination of \( \sigma_{\text{rel}} \), decay length distributions are compared between data and Monte Carlo, as well as proper decay length significance, \( \chi^2 \) vertex distributions, and other variables used in the selection. In all these comparisons, the data and Monte Carlo distributions are found to be in good agreement. One such example is Fig. 2 which shows the proper decay length [33] distribution of \( K^0_S \) candidates. As a final cross-check, lifetime measurements are performed for the
 proper decay length distributions for $K^0_S$ candidates in the decay $B^0 \to J/\psi K^0_S$ for background subtracted signal compared to the full Monte Carlo (MC) simulation. The ratio Signal/MC is given in the bottom panel.

In summary, using an integrated luminosity of 6.1 fb$^{-1}$ collected with the D0 detector, we measure the production fraction multiplied by the branching fraction for the decay $\Lambda_b \to J/\psi \Lambda$ relative to that for the decay $B^0 \to J/\psi K^0_S$.

$\sigma_{rel} = 0.345 \pm 0.034$ (stat.)
\[\pm 0.033 \text{ (syst.)} \pm 0.003 \text{ (PDG)}.\]  

Combining the uncertainties in quadrature, we obtain $\sigma_{rel} = 0.345 \pm 0.047$. Our measurement is the most precise to date and exceeds the precision of the current value reported as the world average, $0.27 \pm 0.13$ [14]. Using the PDG value $f(b \to B^0) \cdot B(B^0 \to J/\psi K^0_s) = (1.74 \pm 0.08) \times 10^{-4}$ (from [14]), we obtain

$$f(b \to \Lambda_b) \cdot B(\Lambda_b \to J/\psi \Lambda) =$$
\[6.01 \pm 0.60 \text{ (stat.)} \pm 0.58 \text{ (syst.)}
\[\pm 0.28 \text{ (PDG)} \times 10^{-5} = (6.01 \pm 0.88) \times 10^{-5},\]

which can be compared directly to the world average value of $(4.7 \pm 2.3) \times 10^{-5}$ [14]. This result represents a reduction by a factor of $\sim 3$ of the uncertainty with respect to the previous measurement [28].

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References:

[35] The event-by-event value of the proper decay length is defined as $L_{xy} M/p_T$, where $p_T$ and $M$ are the transverse momentum and mass of the $b$ hadron, respectively, and $L_{xy}$ is the distance between the $p\bar{p}$ interaction vertex and the $b$ hadron decay vertex in the transverse plane.