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Search for single vector-like quarks in $p\bar{p}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 1.96$ TeV

We present a search for hypothetical vector-like quarks in $p\bar{p}$ collisions at $\sqrt{s} = 1.96$ TeV. The data were collected by the D0 detector at the Fermilab Tevatron Collider and correspond to an integrated luminosity of $5.4 \text{ fb}^{-1}$. We select events with a final state composed of a $W$ or $Z$ boson and a jet consistent with a heavy object decay. We observe no significant excess in comparison to the background prediction and set limits on production cross sections for vector-like quarks decaying to $W$+jet and $Z$+jet. These are the most stringent limits to date for electroweak single vector-like quark production at hadron colliders.

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The standard model (SM) of particle physics, despite its many successes in accurately describing interactions below the TeV scale, is known to suffer shortcomings at higher energy scales. A wide range of theories have therefore been proposed to describe phenomena at the TeV scale and beyond, among them warped extra dimensions [1], universal extra dimensions [2], and little Higgs [3] models. There exist particular realizations of each of these theories that predict the existence of vector-like quarks [4–6], massive particles which share many characteristics with SM quarks. The notable exception is that the right-handed and left-handed components of vector-like quarks transform in the same way under $SU(3) \times SU(2) \times U(1)$, hence their name.

Previous searches for strong pair production of vector-like quarks at the Fermilab Tevatron Collider have excluded masses of up to 338 GeV at the 95% C.L. [7]. However, recent years have seen the development of theoretical scenarios in which corrections to SM quark couplings arising from their mixing with vector-like quarks cancel out, permitting the two types of quarks to mix to a degree unconstrained by precision electroweak measurements and $b$-factory results. Such large mixing with no introduction of anomalous couplings allows for single production of vector-like quarks at hadron colliders via the weak interaction [4]. Diagrams for single electroweak

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Vector-like quark production are shown in Figure 1.

Generally, electroweak couplings to SM quarks are set by the parameter $\kappa_{qQ}$:

$$\kappa_{qQ} = \frac{v}{m_Q} \tilde{\kappa}_{qQ},$$

where $v$ is the vacuum expectation value of the SM Higgs field, $m_Q$ is the mass of the vector-like quark, and $\tilde{\kappa}_{qQ}$ is the coupling strength. Provided this coupling is not too small, a search for singly produced vector-like quarks can benefit from the lower kinematic threshold compared to pair production and stands to improve the mass limit considerably.

In this Letter, we present a search for singly produced vector-like quarks using data corresponding to an integrated luminosity of 5.4 fb$^{-1}$ collected by the D0 detector at the Fermilab Tevatron Collider. We consider a model in which there are two doublets of vector-like quarks that couple to the first generation of SM quarks. Vector-like quark final states are characterized by either a W or Z boson and at least two jets, one of which results from the decay of the vector-like quark, while another is produced in association with the vector-like quark at the primary vertex. We select events in which the vector boson decays to either electron(s) or muon(s).

The D0 detector is described in detail in [8]. The region of the D0 detector closest to the interaction point contains a central-tracking system consisting of a silicon microstrip tracker (SMT) and a central fiber tracker (CFT), both of which are located within a 2 T superconducting solenoidal magnet. Hits in these two detectors are used to reconstruct tracks from charged particles. Surrounding the two tracking subdetectors are liquid-argon and uranium calorimeters, both electromagnetic and hadronic, which have a central section (CC) covering pseudorapidities $|\eta| \lesssim 1.1$, and two end calorimeters (EC) that extend coverage to $|\eta| \approx 4.2$, with all three housed in separate cryostats. Electrons are identified as isolated energy clusters in the electromagnetic calorimeter, with a shape consistent with that of an electron, matched to a track in the inner detector. Jets are reconstructed in the calorimeters using the iterative midpoint cone algorithm with a cone of radius $R = 0.5$ in $\eta - \phi$ space. An outer muon system, providing coverage for $|\eta| < 2$, consists of a layer of tracking detectors and scintillation trigger counters in front of 1.8 T toroids, followed by two similar layers after the toroids. Muons are identified via a combination of reconstructed tracks in both the outer muon system and the central tracking system, and are required to be isolated from both tracker and calorimeter activity.

Vector-like quark signals and background processes, which include electrons or muons from W or Z boson decays, are modeled using Monte Carlo (MC) simulation. Signal samples are generated using MADGRAPH [11], with CTEQ6L1 [12] parton distribution functions, LO cross sections from [4] and vector-like quark resonance widths calculated with BRIDGE [13]. Subsequent parton shower evolution is generated with PYTHIA [14]. We set $\tilde{\kappa}_{UD} = 1$, $\tilde{\kappa}_{dU} = \sqrt{2}$ and $\tilde{\kappa}_{uL} = \tilde{\kappa}_{dL} = 0$, such that down-type vector-like quarks decay exclusively to $Wq$ and up-type quarks decay exclusively to $Zq$. This choice, while affecting the production rates and therefore the excluded vector-like quark masses, does not affect the cross section limits themselves. We generate up- and down-type vector-like quark signals with masses between 280 GeV and 700 GeV. Backgrounds from $t\bar{t}$, $W \rightarrow \ell\nu+\text{jets}$, and $Z \rightarrow \ell\ell+\text{jets}$ production are modeled using ALPGEN [15], also interfaced to PYTHIA. For these events, we use a matching procedure to avoid double counting partons produced by ALPGEN and those added by the showering in PYTHIA [16]. Diboson samples are generated with PYTHIA, and single top quark production is modeled using the COMPREP [17] generator. All MC samples are passed through a GEANT [18] simulation of the D0 detector and are overlaid with data events from randomly chosen beam crossings to simulate the effect of multiple $p\bar{p}$ interactions and detector noise. MC events are then reconstructed using the same software that is used for data reconstruction. The $W+\text{jets}$ and $Z+\text{jets}$ samples are normalized to the leading-log cross section reported by ALPGEN times a $k$-factor calculated by MCFM [19]. The $t\bar{t}$ samples are normalized to a next-to-next-to-leading order (NNLO) cross section for $m_t = 172.5$ GeV [20], and the diboson samples ($WW$, $WZ$ and $ZZ$) to the NLO cross section predicted by MCFM [21]. All simulated events are corrected for differences in trigger and reconstruction efficiencies between data and simulation.

We conduct the search in two channels, corresponding to vector-like quark decays to $(W \rightarrow \ell\nu)+\text{jet}$ and $(Z \rightarrow \ell\ell)+\text{jet}$. In the $W+\text{jets}$ channel, we initially select events which have passed a single lepton trigger and contain exactly one electron ($|\eta| < 1.1$) or muon ($|\eta| < 2.0$) with transverse momentum $p_T > 20$ GeV, at least two jets with $p_T > 20$ GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$, and missing transverse energy $E_T$, corrected for the momentum of any muons in the event, greater than 15 GeV. We also require $2M_T^W + E_T > 80$ GeV, where $M_T^W$ is the trans-
verse mass of the lepton-$E_T$ system, in order to suppress the multijet background. In the $Z$+jets channel, we initially select events with exactly two electrons or muons in addition to at least two jets, all with same $p_T$ thresholds as used in the $W$+jets channel. Events are selected by a mixture of single lepton, dilepton and lepton plus jets triggers. Due to the low rate of background without real $Z$ bosons, electrons are also accepted in the endcap electromagnetic calorimeters (1.5 < $|\eta|$ < 2.5). The two leptons are required to have an invariant mass between 70 and 110 GeV, i.e. consistent with that of a $Z$ boson. Additionally, we require $E_T < 50$ GeV, as this channel contains only instrumental sources of missing transverse energy.

The largest physics background to the single lepton channel is $W(\rightarrow \ell\nu)+\text{jets}$ production, with smaller contributions from $Z$+jets, $t\bar{t}$, diboson, and single top quark processes. The main instrumental background arises from multijet events in which one of the jets is misidentified as a high-$p_T$ isolated lepton in the detector. We model this background using data events which fail the calorimeter shower shape requirements for the electron or the isolation requirements for the muon, but pass all other selection criteria. In the single electron channel, we estimate the relative fraction of real electrons from $W$ boson decays and misidentified electrons from jets by determining the efficiencies for each type of event to pass a tighter selection. These efficiencies are calculated in $Z \rightarrow ee$ data for real electrons and in a $E_T < 20$ GeV sample for misidentified electrons. In the single muon channel, we scale the events failing the muon isolation requirement to match the number of events obtained after subtracting the expected number of real $W$ bosons satisfying the event selection from the number of events observed in data.

In the dilepton channel, $(Z \rightarrow \ell\ell)+\text{jets}$ events dominate the SM background. In order to correct the Monte Carlo for the small trigger inefficiency in the data, we apply a global normalization determined using a pure $Z \rightarrow \ell\ell$ sample. The ratio between the data yield in this sample and the predicted yield from the inclusive $Z$ boson cross section multiplied by the branching ratio is associated with the overall trigger efficiency, and the Monte Carlo distributions are scaled by this ratio. The multijet background is modeled using data events in which both leptons fail quality criteria (for electrons) or isolation criteria (for muons), and is normalized to the difference between data and MC in the dilepton mass window between 40 and 70 GeV.

The signal contains events with a $W$ or $Z$ boson and jets, all with high transverse momentum, as the decay products of a high mass resonance. We apply several kinematic selection criteria to select events of this type and to minimize the contributions from SM background processes. In the single lepton channel, we require lepton $p_T > 50$ GeV, highest jet $p_T > 100$ GeV, $E_T > 40(50)$ GeV for the muon (electron) channel, and that the separation in azimuthal angle $\phi$ between the lepton and the $E_T$ be less than 2. As the signal contains real $W$ bosons, we additionally require $M_W^F < 150$ GeV.

Table I displays the observed number of data events, along with estimated background yields, after the final event selection in the single lepton and dilepton channels. Fig. 2 shows the reconstructed vector-like quark transverse mass, defined as

$$(M_T^Q)^2 = (\sqrt{p_{Tw}^2 + M_W^2 + p_{r1}^2})^2 - (\vec{p}_{Tw} + \vec{p}_{r1})^2,$$ (2)

for the single lepton channel, where $M_W = 80.3$ GeV is the mass of the $W$ boson and $\vec{p}_{r1}$ refers to the transverse momentum of the leading jet in the event. Also shown in Fig. 2 is the vector-like quark mass in the dilepton channel, reconstructed as the invariant mass of the dilepton + leading jet system.

Major sources of systematic uncertainty common to both analyses include modeling of $W/Z$+jets backgrounds (15%); cross sections for $t\bar{t}$ (10%), diboson (6%), and $W/Z$+jets (6%) production; and jet energy scale and resolution (1%–5%). Major systematic uncertain-
likelihood fitter \cite{23} that incorporates a log-likelihood ratio
employ a modified frequentist approach using the D0 like-
its on vector-like quark production cross sections. We
ground prediction in either channel, therefore we set lim-
is small after the final selection.

ties unique to the single lepton analysis include inte-
egrated luminosity (6.1%) \cite{22}, lepton identification effi-
ciencies (3%), high-p_T muon modeling, and trigger mod-
eling (1%). A systematic uncertainty of 5% is assigned to
the global background normalization applied to the dilep-
ton MC samples. Systematic uncertainties on multijet
normalization are 6.5%–100%, depending on the chan-
nel. These do not have a large effect on the overall back-
ground prediction, as the estimated multijet background
is small after the final selection.

We observe no significant excess of data over the back-
ground prediction in either channel, therefore we set lim-
its on vector-like quark production cross sections. We
employ a modified frequentist approach using the D0 like-
lihood fitter \cite{23} that incorporates a log-likelihood ratio
(LLR) test statistic \cite{24}. We calculate confidence levels
for the signal plus background ($CL_{s+b}$) and background-
only ($CL_b$) hypotheses by integrating the (LLR) distri-
butions obtained by generating pseudo-experiments
using Poisson statistics. Systematic uncertainties are
treated as uncertainties on the expected number of sig-
al and background events. The 95% confidence level
limit is defined as the signal cross section for which
$CL_s \equiv CL_{s+b}/CL_b$ is 0.05. Using as discriminant vari-
ables the vector-like quark transverse mass for decays to
$Wq$ and the vector-like quark mass for decays to $Zq$,
we obtain 95% C.L. limits on vector-like quark production
cross sections. These are shown in Figs. 3 and 4 along
with leading order theoretical predictions for two differ-
ent scenarios. For the case of $\kappa_{uD} = 1$ and $\kappa_{uU} = \sqrt{2}$
with no coupling to the down quark, we exclude masses
below 693 GeV for a vector-like quark decayi
s exclusively to
$Zq$
with no coupling to the up quark, the corresponding mass
limits are 403 GeV and 430 GeV, respectively.

FIG. 2: (a) Vector-like quark transverse mass and (b) vector-
like quark mass for the single lepton and dilepton channels,
respectively. Distributions for signal processes $Q_D \rightarrow Wq$
and $Q_U \rightarrow Zq$ are normalized to the integrated luminosity
of the data and include detector acceptance and reconstruc-
tion efficiencies. These assume $\kappa_{uD} = 1$ and $\kappa_{uU} = \sqrt{2}$.

FIG. 3: Excluded production cross section for a vector-like
quark $Q$ decaying to $Wq$ as a function of $m_Q$, compared to
LO predictions of vector-like quark production with different
$\kappa_{uQ}$.

FIG. 4: Excluded production cross section for a vector-like
quark $Q$ decaying to $Zq$ as a function of $m_Q$, compared to
LO predictions of vector-like quark production with different
$\kappa_{uQ}$.
In summary, we have presented a search for single vector-like quark production at the Tevatron in the $W$+jets and $Z$+jets final states. The observed data are consistent with the background expectation and limits on vector-like quark cross sections are derived. We exclude vector-like quark masses below 693 GeV for decays to $Wq$ and masses below 551 GeV for decays to $Zq$ at 95% C.L. assuming vector-like quark – SM quark mixing parameters $\tilde{\kappa}_{UD} = 1$ and $\tilde{\kappa}_{uU} = \sqrt{2}$ along with 100% branching ratios to the respective final states.

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[9] The D0 detector utilizes a right-handed coordinate system with the $z$ axis pointing in the direction of the proton beam and the $y$ axis pointing upwards. The azimuthal angle $\phi$ is defined in the $x$-$y$ plane measured from the $x$ axis. The pseudorapidity is defined as $\eta = -\ln[\tan(\theta/2)]$, where $\theta = \arctan(\sqrt{x^2 + y^2/z})$. Transverse variables are defined as projections of the variables onto the $x$-$y$ plane.