Study of high momentum $\eta'$ production in $B \to \eta'X_s$

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We measure the branching fraction for the charmless semi-inclusive process $B \rightarrow \eta' X_s$, where the $\eta'$ meson has a momentum in the range 2.0 to 2.7 GeV/c in the $\Upsilon(4S)$ center-of-mass frame and $X_s$ represents a system comprising a kaon and zero to four pions. We find $B(B \rightarrow \eta' X_s) =$
The production of high momentum $\eta'$ mesons in $B$ meson decays is expected to be dominated by the $B \to \eta' X_s$ process, where $X_s$ is a strange hadronic system, generated by the $b \to s q^*$ transition as depicted in Fig. 1(a-c). Figure 1(d) shows the color-suppressed modes $B^0 \to \eta' D^{(*)0}$, which are significant sources of background and which have been measured for the first time recently [1]. Contributions from $b \to u$ transitions and other sources of $\eta'$ are expected to be negligible [2].

The large $B \to \eta' X_s$ branching fraction measured by the CLEO collaboration [3], prompted intense theoretical activity, which focused the special character of the $\eta'$ meson as receiving much of its mass from the QCD anomaly.

A later measurement by CLEO confirmed the large $\eta'$ production, measuring $B(B \to \eta' X_{ns}) = (4.6 \pm 1.1^{(\text{stat})} \pm 0.4^{(\text{syst})} \pm 0.5^{(bkg)}) \times 10^{-4}$ [3], where $X_{ns}$ denotes a charmless recoiling hadronic system.

The rate for $B \to \eta' X_s$ and especially the fully background-subtracted distribution of the mass of $X_s$ can provide important clues to the dynamics of weak decays and to the structure of the isosinglet pseudoscalar mesons.

We present results for the branching fraction $B(B \to \eta' X_s)$ and the mass spectrum of $X_s$. The signal is analyzed for $\eta'$ momentum between 2.0 and 2.7 GeV/c in the CM to suppress background coming from $b \to c \to \eta'$ cascades such as $B \to D_s X$ with $D_s \to \eta' X$, $B \to D X$ with $D \to \eta' X$, $B \to \Lambda_c X$ with $\Lambda_c \to \eta' X$. Our analysis is based on data collected with the BABAR detector [4] at the PEP-II asymmetric $e^+ e^-$ collider located at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center. An integrated luminosity of 81.4 fb$^{-1}$, corresponding to 88.4 million $B \bar{B}$ pairs, was recorded at the $Y(4S)$ resonance (on-resonance) and 9.6 fb$^{-1}$ were recorded 40 MeV below this resonance (off-resonance), for continuum background studies.

Two tracking devices are used for the detection of charged particles: a silicon vertex tracker consisting of five layers of double-sided silicon microstrip detectors, and a 40-layer central drift chamber, both operating in the 1.5 T magnetic field of a superconducting solenoid. Photons and electrons are detected by a CsI(Tl) electromagnetic calorimeter. Charged-particle identification is provided by the average energy loss ($dE/dx$) in the tracking devices, and by an internally reflecting ring-imaging Cherenkov detector covering the central region.

We select $B \bar{B}$ events by requiring at least four charged tracks and a value of the ratio of the second to zeroth Fox-Wolfram moment [10] less than 0.5.

We form a $B$ candidate by combining an $\eta' \to \eta \pi^+ \pi^-$, where the $\eta$ decays into $\gamma \gamma$, with a $K^+$ or a $K^0_s$ that is reconstructed in the $\pi^+ \pi^-$ channel, and up to four pions, of which at most one is a $\pi^0$, leading to 16 possible channels [11]:

- $B^+ \to \eta' K^+ (\pi^0)$
- $B^0 \to \eta' K^0_s (\pi^0)$
- $B^+ \to \eta' K^0 (\pi^0)$
- $B^0 \to \eta' K^+ (\pi^0)$
- $B^+ \to \eta' K^0_s (\pi^0)$
- $B^0 \to \eta' K^+ (\pi^0)$
- $B^+ \to \eta' K^0 (\pi^0)$
- $B^0 \to \eta' K^+ (\pi^0)$

The mass of the $\eta \to \gamma \gamma$, $K^0_s \to \pi^+ \pi^-$ and $\pi^0 \to \gamma \gamma$ candidates are required to lie within $3 \sigma$ ($\sigma = 16.3$ and 6 MeV/$c^2$ respectively) of their known values and are then kinematically constrained to their nominal masses.

To identify the $s$ quark in the $X_s$ system, we require a $K^0_s$ or a track consistent with a charged kaon.

The charged-kaon selection has been optimized to reduce background from $B \to \pi^+ \pi^- \rho$, and $\eta \to \gamma \gamma$ decays. For the $K^0_s$, we require the angle $\theta$ between the momentum of the $K^0_s$ candidate and its flight direction to be less than 0.05 radians, as it peaks at zero for true $K^0_s$ particles.

We require candidates for $B \to \eta' X_s$ to be consistent with a $B$ decay, based on the beam-energy-substituted mass, $m_{ES} = \sqrt{(s/2 + p_{BS})^2/E^2_p - p_{BS}^2}$ and the energy difference, $\Delta E = E_p - \sqrt{s}/2$, where $E$ and $p$ denote the energy and momentum of the particles, the subscripts $0$ and $B$ refer to the initial $Y(4S)$ and the $B$ candidate, respectively, the asterisk denotes the $Y(4S)$ rest frame, and $\sqrt{s}$ is the $e^+ e^-$ center-of-mass energy. In addition, the cosine of the angle between the thrust axis of the $B$ candidate and that of the rest of the event in the center-of-mass frame (cos $\theta_T$) is used to remove continuum background, which is peaked near $| \cos \theta_T | = 1$, while signal events are uniformly distributed. We require $m_{ES} > 5.265$ GeV/$c^2$, $| \Delta E | < 0.1$ GeV, and $| \cos \theta_T | < 0.8$. For each event, we select the candidate with the smallest $\chi^2$, with $\chi^2$ defined by

$$
(3.9 \pm 0.8^{(\text{stat})} \pm 0.5^{(\text{syst})} \pm 0.8^{(\text{model})}) \times 10^{-4}
$$

We also obtain the $X_s$ mass distribution and find that it tends to favor models predicting high masses.
\[ \chi^2 = \frac{(m_{ES} - M_B)^2}{\sigma^2(m_{ES})} + \frac{(\Delta E)^2}{\sigma^2(\Delta E)}, \]

where \( M_B \) is the B-meson mass and where the resolutions \( \sigma(m_{ES}) = 3 \text{ MeV}/c^2 \) and \( \sigma(\Delta E) = 25 \text{ MeV} \) are obtained from Monte Carlo simulation. The remaining continuum background is subtracted with the use of off-resonance data.

The background contribution from color-suppressed modes \( \bar{B}^0 \rightarrow \eta' D^{(*)0} \) is estimated from a Monte Carlo simulation which uses our measurement of its branching fraction, \( \mathcal{B}(\bar{B}^0 \rightarrow \eta' D^{(*)0}) = (1.7 \pm 0.4 \text{ (stat)} \pm 0.2 \text{ (syst)}) \times 10^{-4} \).

To determine efficiencies, we model the signal using a combination of the two-body mode \( B \rightarrow \eta' K \) and, for \( X_s \) masses above the \( K \pi \) threshold, a non-resonant derived from the theoretical predictions [1, 2, 3], which are based on the anomalous \( \eta' \)-gluon-gluon coupling and which favor high-mass \( X_s \) systems. The fraction of the two-body mode is constrained in the simulation model to be between 10\% and 15\% [4, 5]. When not forming a \( K \) meson, the \( X_s \) fragments into \( s \bar{q} \) and \( s \bar{q} q \) (\( q = u, d \)). We find that the overall efficiency is (6.0 \pm 0.2)\% for the \( K^\pm \) modes and (4.7 \pm 0.1)\% for the \( K^0_s \) modes, including the branching fraction \( \mathcal{B}(K^0_s \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^-) \).

The branching fraction of \( B \rightarrow \eta' X_s \) is computed through a fit to the number of \( \eta' \) signal events, with \( \eta' \) momentum between 2.0 and 2.7 \text{ GeV}/c, both for on-resonance and off-resonance data. To parameterize the background, we use a Gaussian function for the signal and a second order polynomial. For the fit of the off-resonance data sample, we constrain the mass and width of the \( \eta' \) to the values obtained with on-resonance data. Figure 2 shows the fits of the \( \eta \pi \eta \) invariant mass distributions for the \( K^\pm \) and \( K^0_s \) modes. The fitted yields are reported in Table I.

![Figure 2](image-url)

The semi-inclusive branching fraction is computed by performing a weighted average of the results obtained for the \( K^\pm \) and \( K^0_s \) modes. The detection efficiencies are corrected to account for the \( \eta' \) and \( \eta \) branching fractions to the channel we observe. For the \( K^0_s \) modes, we convert the result so it corresponds to \( K^0 \) and \( \bar{K}^0 \). The final state \( X_s \) includes both \( K^+ \) and \( K^- \)-tagged decays. Assuming that their branching fractions are equal, we obtain \( \mathcal{B}(B \rightarrow \eta' X_s) = (3.9 \pm 0.8 \text{ (stat)} \pm 0.5 \text{ (syst)} \pm 0.8 \text{ (model)}) \times 10^{-4} \). We obtain the systematic error by combining the sources listed in Table II.

The largest uncertainty arises from our model of the \( X_s \) system. To estimate that uncertainty, we use an alternative model which consists of a combination of resonant modes: \( \eta' K, \eta' K^* \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \), \( \eta' K_1 \). The variability of the efficiency and our knowledge of the resonant sector lead us to assign a 20\% systematic uncertainty. Other systematic uncertainties include track reconstruction efficiency, reconstruction efficiencies of \( \pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma \gamma \), \( \eta \rightarrow \gamma \gamma \), and \( K^0_s \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^- \) candidates, charged-kaon identification efficiency, secondary branching fractions, number of \( B \bar{B} \) events \( (N_{B \bar{B}}) \), the size of our Monte-Carlo sample, and subtraction of the background from \( \bar{B}^0 \rightarrow \eta' D^{(*)0} \).

| Source                      | \( K^\pm \) syst (%) | \( K^0_s \) syst (%) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Tracking                    | 3.4                   | 3.3                   |
| \( \eta' \pi^0 \) detection | 7.0                   | 8.2                   |
| \( K/K^0_s \) ID            | 2.5                   | 4.3                   |
| \( \mathcal{B}(\eta' \rightarrow \eta \gamma \pi \pi) \) | 3.4                   | 3.4                   |
| \( N_{B \bar{B}} \)         | 1.1                   | 1.1                   |
| MC sample size              | 3.0                   | 3.0                   |
| \( \eta' D^{(*)0} \) subtraction | 3.0              | 2.9                   |
| Total                       | 12.1                 | 13.5                  |
| Model                       | 20                   | 20                   |

TABLE I: Results of the fits for \( K^\pm \) and \( K^0_s \) modes. Yields for on-resonance data \( (Y_{ON}) \), off-resonance data \( (Y_{OFF}) \), expectation from color-suppressed background \( (Y_{CS}) \) and on-resonance data after background subtraction \( (Y) \) are given. A luminosity scale factor, \( f = 8.48 \), is applied to the off-resonance yield.

The variability of the efficiency and our knowledge of the resonant sector lead us to assign a 20\% systematic uncertainty. Other systematic uncertainties include track reconstruction efficiency, reconstruction efficiencies of \( \pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma \gamma \), \( \eta \rightarrow \gamma \gamma \), and \( K^0_s \rightarrow \pi^+ \pi^- \) candidates, charged-kaon identification efficiency, secondary branching fractions, number of \( B \bar{B} \) events \( (N_{B \bar{B}}) \), the size of our Monte-Carlo sample, and subtraction of the background from \( \bar{B}^0 \rightarrow \eta' D^{(*)0} \).

To explore the \( X_s \) mass distribution, we select \( B \) candidates for which the mass of the \( \eta' \) is within three standard deviations of the known value, and subtract the continuum contribution by using on-resonance data in the sideband \( 5.200 < m_{ES} < 5.256 \text{ GeV}/c^2 \). The contin-
region, the expected color-suppressed background, and shows the fitted yields for the raw signal, the sideband respectively. The sideband yields ($Y_{SB}$) must be corrected by the sideband to signal region scaling factor (see text) before subtraction.

| $m(X_s)$ range | $Y_{ON}$ | $Y_{SB}$ | $Y_{CS}$ | $Y$     |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|---------|
| [0.4, 0.6]     | 200 ± 15 | 46.1 ± 8.8 | —        | 172.8 ± 15.9 |
| [0.6, 1.2]     | 120 ± 14 | 100 ± 13  | —        | 60.9 ± 16.0  |
| [1.2, 1.5]     | 114 ± 15 | 112 ± 14  | 1.1 ± 0.3 | 46.7 ± 17.1  |
| [1.5, 1.8]     | 150 ± 18 | 163 ± 17  | 7.7 ± 1.6 | 46.0 ± 20.7  |
| [1.8, 2.0]     | 140 ± 17 | 93 ± 15   | 47.4 ± 9.6| 37.6 ± 21.4  |
| [2.0, 2.3]     | 149 ± 20 | 142 ± 18  | 26.2 ± 4.5| 38.9 ± 23.1  |
| [2.3, 2.5]     | 80 ± 14  | 70 ± 14   | 4.9 ± 0.9 | 33.7 ± 16.3  |

FIG. 5: Branching fractions as a function of $m(X_s)$. Both (a) and (b) show the same data, though the efficiency used in (a) is derived from the non-resonant model, while that in (b) the efficiency comes from the model with a combination of resonances. The errors include bin-to-bin systematics; an additional systematic error of $\sim$8% (not shown) is common to all points. (a) The open histogram represents the expectation from a mixture of resonant modes with equal proportions. The hatched histogram results if some heavy resonances are enhanced. The equal mixture provides a good approximation to what is predicted in $12$.

The branching fraction as a function of $m(X_s)$, obtained from the fully background-subtracted yield (Table III), is shown in Fig. 4. We compare data and simulation by forming a $\chi^2$ difference. The $\chi^2$ probability for the nonresonant $X_s$ model (Fig. 5(a)) to fit the data is 61% while it is close to $\sim 10^{-7}$ for the equal mixture of resonances (Fig. 5(b)). We find improved agreement with the resonant model if the weights of $K_0^*$ and $K_0^*$ are increased by a factor of 1.5, leading to a probability of 2%.

As a consistency check of the method, we measure the two-body decay modes ($X_s = K^\pm, K_0^0$), and find 171.0 ± 14.0 and 27.1 ± 5.6 events in on-resonance data for $\eta' K^\pm$ and $\eta' K_0^0$ respectively, and no $\eta'$ signal events for both channels in off-resonance data, leading to the branching fractions $B(B^\pm \to \eta' K^\pm) = (6.9 \pm 0.6(stat)) \times 10^{-5}$ and $B(B^0 \to \eta' K_0^0) = (5.6 \pm 1.2(stat)) \times 10^{-5}$. These values
are fully compatible with what has been measured by recent exclusive analyses [13, 14].

In summary, we have measured the branching fraction, \( \mathcal{B}(B \to \eta' X_s) = (3.9 \pm 0.8 \text{(stat)} \pm 0.5 \text{(syst)} \pm 0.8 \text{(model)}) \times 10^{-4} \), for \( 2.0 < p^*(\eta') < 2.7 \) GeV/c. We have also derived the \( m(X_s) \) spectrum and found that the data tends to confirm models predicting a peak at high masses and seems to disfavor predictions based only on the diagram of Fig. 1(a,b) for which \( m(X_s) \) peaks near 1.4-1.5 GeV/c\(^2\) [12].

Among the various theoretical conjectures to explain this production, an \( \eta' gg \) coupling due to the QCD anomaly has been widely suggested as a likely explanation. However, the \( \eta' gg \) form factor initially proposed [4] is disfavored by recent studies of the inclusive production \( \Upsilon(1S) \to \eta' X \) [15, 16]. A recently updated approach [6] exploiting the same \( \eta' \) gluon anomaly could in principle account for the observed branching fraction and the \( m(X_s) \) spectrum.

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