





Kaon Structure Functions

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Talk Overview

- Motivation for hadron and meson structure research
- Current meson structure experiments and data
- Theoretical predictions
- Planned future research
 - Proposed J-Lab experiments
 - $\circ \quad {\sf Research \, proposed \, for \, EIC}$
- Current simulation campaign
- Current simulation analysis results
- Potential further work
- Summary

Understanding Hadron and Meson mass

Proton:

Quark structure: *uud* Mass ≈940 MeV with majority generated by dynamics

Pion:

Quark structure: $u\overline{d}$ Mass \approx 140 MeV dynamically generated mass

Kaon:

Quark structure: us

Mass ≈490 MeV boundary of Higgs and emergent mass mechanisms

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Interference of emergent hadron mass & Higgs mechanism
Higgs mechanism

Mass budget for nucleons and mesons are vastly different

- Proton (and heavy meson) mass is large in the chiral limit expression of Emergent hadronic mass (EHM)
- Pion/kaon: Nambu-Goldstone Boson of QCD: massless in the chiral limit
 - chiral symmetry of massless QCD dynamically broken by quark-gluon interactions and inclusion of light quark masses (DCSB, giving pion/kaon mass)
 - Without Higgs mechanism of mass generation pion/kaon would be indistinguishable

[Courtesy of Tanja Horn's talk from Workshop on Parton Distributions in the EIC Era]

Probing Meson Structure with DIS

DIS allows us to extract information about the internal parton structure of subatomic particles. Can compare the distribution of different partons that makeup particles such as pions, kaons with the proton for example

Experiments at HERA greatly developed our understanding.





Accessing Meson Structure: Drell-Yan and the Sullivan process

Most existing data is from the Drell-Yan process where a quark and antiquark pair from a meson, such as a pion, and a proton annihilate leading to a virtual photon that decays into a lepton pair.

The Sullivan process uses an electron scattered from the meson cloud of a nucleon to infer information on the mesons structure function.

Tagged Deep Inelastic Scattering is an experimental process that refers to tagging the final state N particle, which allows reconstruction of virtual meson.





Current Theory and Data on the Pion and Kaon

From previous experiments at CERN and Fermilab there is some understanding of distributions within pions but almost no data for kaons.

With more TDIS data can hopefully reduce PDF uncertainties.

Current planned research in to meson SF with Drell-Yan at COMPASS, AMBER and via Sulliva process TDIS experiments at JLAB. (2019 LOI arXiv:1808.00848) (https://www.jlab.org/exp_prog/proposals/15/PR12-15-006.pdf)









- x, Q^2 , W^2 , and M_x of recoiling system
- DIS with spectator tagging

0.05 < x < 0.2

- · Access to effective free targets not easily found in nature
- · Small -t to maximise "true" pion content
- Very low momentum recoiling hadrons (60 400 MeV/c) → need novel detector
- First direct measurement of mesonic content of nucleon • Aims to extract pion and kaon F₂ in valence regime

Planned J-Lab Experiments for Pion and Kaon SF [Courtesy of Rachel Montgomery]

Plans for the EIC Campaign

EIC high luminosity and wide CM energy range will make a large contribution to the understanding of meson structure.

TDIS at EIC would be sullivan process reactions detached in the far forward region.

In the short term aim to simulate the the lambda decay sullivan process reactions from the ZDC FF detector, to access pion and kaon SFs using TDIS techniques, covered later.



[https://arxiv.org/pdf/2103.05419]

Meson SF Data Process



Data and CSVs courtesy of Avnish Singh, CUA, and Dmitry Romanov, JLab EIC Meson SF Working Group • 15.07.25

Meson Simulation Campaign

• Large-scale Meson SF Campaign

- Key Difference: K_Lambda System
 - Progression from pion-neutron tagging
 - Kaon SF through Sullivan Process
 - Increased decay complexity

 $e + p \rightarrow e' + K^+ + \Lambda$



Preliminary Results from Meson Simulation Campaign

- 01 Double Angle
- 02 Electron
- ⁰³ Jacquet-Blondel
- ⁰⁴ Machine Learning

⁰⁴ Sigma

X: Bjorken X, the fraction of the hadron's momentum carried by the struck quark

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Electron vs Monte Carlo

Figures: Electron Method reconstruction for x_bj. Top left of kinematics 5x41, top right has kinematics 10x100, bottom left has kinematics 18x275 (list here)

Q^2 Preliminary Results

Q²: Four-momentum squared of lepton (electron)









Resolution Lambda

Measurement of how good the reconstructions performed compared to the MC events

(Reconstruction-Truth)/Truth

y parameter in DIS represents the fraction of the lepton's energy transfer to the hadronic system

y>0.1: Higher inelasticity region

y<= 0.1: Lower inelasticity region

- y-cuts allow better visualization of data



Q2: Very Tight, little scatter especially for y>0.1

X_bj: Also very good correlation with little spread





Q2: Still good correlation, but increasing scatter

X_bj: Significant broadening, more reconstruction issues at this energy. Log plot indicates resolution extends over a much larger range





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Summary & Next Steps

Mesons are vital to our understanding of hadron structure, and Meson Structure Functions have the potential to improve our understanding of the boundaries of the Standard Model

Meson SF data is very sparse - and there are practically none for kaons

EIC/ePIC Meson Simulation Campaign has been completed with the particular focus on the kaon

Initial results identified the suitable reconstruction method (electron) and initial t-resolution analysis

Next steps:

- Fix reconstruction resolution issues
- Find appropriate binning
- Structure Function extraction

Backup Slides













Reconstruction Method Details









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Mandelstam -t Resolution (Reco - Truth) for 18x275





COUNTS

Mandelstam -t Distribution (5x41, Reco Mean $\pm 1\sigma$)



Mandelstam -t Resolution (Reco - Truth) for 5x41



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10xC10QdncbistWorking Group • 15.07.25

Mandelstam -t Distribution (10x100, Fixed Range)



Mandelstam -t Resolution (Reco - Truth) for 10x100

