Hadron multiplicity in jets in $e^+e^-$ annihilation

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(Submitted 24 December 1981)


The $Q^2$ dependence of the average hadron multiplicity for jets in $e^+e^-$ annihilation is calculated in quantum chromodynamics in the approximation of planar diagrams. Kinematic restrictions lead to a result different from that found previously by other investigators.

PACS numbers: 13.65. + i, 12.35.Eq

The hadron multiplicity in $e^+e^-$ annihilation cannot be calculated completely in quantum chromodynamics because of the unresolved problem of quark confinement. The average number of hadrons is related to the average multiplicity of colorless clusters, which consist of partons (a quark, an antiquark, and gluons) according to the hypothesis of preconfinement.¹

According to this hypothesis, the colorless clusters form in $e^+e^-$ annihilation as a result of the sequential decay of a highly virtual quark (or antiquark) with a mass $\sqrt{k^2} \sim \sqrt{Q^2}$, where $Q$ is the 4-momentum of the photon. The average virtualities of the decay products, $p^2$, do not depend on $Q^2$: $p^2 \sim Q_0^2$. Bassetto et al.² have shown that the cluster masses are also limited and are on the order of $Q_0$. Each cluster decays into several hadrons.

The average multiplicity of the heavy partons with mass $\sim Q_0$ in $e^+e^-$ annihilation is calculated by perturbation theory in quantum chromodynamics. Since a quark jet develops primarily through gluons, it is sufficient to calculate the parton multiplicity in the gluon jet, $N_Q$. The number of partons in the quark jet, $N_q$, is related to $N_Q$ by³

$$N_q(Q^2, Q_0^2) \approx \frac{C_F}{C_A} N_G(Q^2, Q_0^2),$$

where $C_F = (N^2 - 1)/2N$, and $C_A = N$ is the number of colors.

The asymptotic expression derived for $N_G$ at large $Q^2$ by the method of summing leading (doubly logarithmic) terms is²,⁴

$$N_G(Q^2, Q_0^2) \sim \exp \left[ 2\sqrt{\frac{1}{2\pi b} \ln \frac{Q^2}{\Lambda^2}} \right], \quad (1)$$

where $12\pi b = 11N - 2N_f$, $N_f$ is the number of flavors, and $\Lambda$ is the scale in the effective coupling constant, $a_s(Q^2) = 1/b \ln Q^2/\Lambda^2$. Only planar diagrams were considered in the derivation of (1).

We might note that the average multiplicities in other hard processes are determined in a universal way by the average number of partons in the quark jet in the $e^+e^-$ annihilation, $N_q$ (Ref. 5).
Mueller\textsuperscript{6} recently derived an expression for $N_G$ in the three-loop approximation. Incorporation of the cross diagrams led to an additional factor of $1/\sqrt{2}$ in the argument of the exponential function in the expression for $N_G$ (Ref. 6):

$$N_G(Q^2, Q_0^2) \sim \exp \left[ \sqrt{\frac{2C_A}{\pi b}} \ln \frac{Q^2}{\Lambda^2} \right]. \quad (2)$$

In the present letter we will show that expression (2) holds even in the approximation of planar diagrams if we consider (in contrast with Refs. 2 and 4) corrections of the type $k^2/Q^2$ to the decay functions $P_G^{GG}$ (see the discussion below).

The number $N_G$ is related to the parton density $n_G(k^2, Q_0^2)$ in a gluon with a fixed virtuality $k^2$:

$$N_G(Q^2, Q_0^2) = \int_{Q_0^2}^{Q^2} \frac{dk^2}{k^2} n_G(k^2, Q_0^2).$$

In turn, $n_G$ satisfies a Bethe-Salpeter equation in the approximation of planar diagrams in the light-cone gauge:

$$n_G(k^2, Q_0^2) = 1 + \frac{a(k^2)}{2\pi} \int \frac{d l^2}{Q_0^2} \int \frac{d l^2}{l^2} n_G(l^2, Q_0^2) \int_0^{1 - \frac{k^2}{l^2}} \frac{dz P_G^{GG}(z, k^2 / Q^2)}{\max \left( 0, 1 - \frac{k^2}{z} - \frac{l^2}{Q^2} \right)}, \quad (3)$$

where $z$ is that fraction of the longitudinal momentum of the initial parton ($k_\parallel = Q/2$) which is carried off by the gluon with virtuality $l^2$. In the gauge chosen here, the function $P_G^{GG}$, which gives the probability for the decay $G \rightarrow GG$, has the following form at small values of $z$:

$$P_G^{GG}(z, k^2 / Q^2) \approx 2C_A \frac{1}{z + k^2 / Q^2}. \quad (4)$$

Analysis of the kinematics reveals a restriction on the range of the integration over $z$ in Eq. (3). We wish to emphasize that in the leading logarithmic approximation the region $Q^2 \gg k^2 \gg l^2 \gg Q_0^2$ makes the leading contribution to $n_G$.

Using the explicit form of the function $P_G^{GG}$ for small $z$ given in (4), we find an equation which describes the $Q^2$ dependence of the average parton multiplicity in the gluon jet:

$$\left( Q^2 \frac{d}{dQ^2} \right)^2 N_G(Q^2, Q_0^2) = \frac{C_A}{2\pi} a^A_1(Q^2) N_G(Q^2, Q_0^2). \quad (5)$$

Solving this equation, we find the result in (2). The quantity $k^2/Q^2$ in Eq. (3) is usually ignored, so that we find expression (1).

An asymptotic expression for $N_G$ at large values of $Q^2$ can also be calculated in noncovariant perturbation theory in the Altarelli-Parisi approach.\textsuperscript{7} In this approach, $N_G$ satisfies
\[ N_G(Q^2, Q^2_0) = 1 + \int_{Q^2_0}^{Q^2} \frac{\alpha(p^2_\perp)}{p^2_\perp} N_G(p^2_\perp, Q^2_0) \int_0^1 dz P_G^{GG}(z, p^2_\perp/Q^2). \] (6)

Calculations show that at \( z \sim 0 \) the function \( P_G^{GG} \) has a singularity of the type

\[ P_G^{GG}(z, p^2_\perp/Q^2) \approx 2C_A \frac{1}{\sqrt{z^2 + p^2_\perp/Q^2}}. \]

Substituting this expression in Eq. (6), we again find that the \( Q^2 \) dependence of the average number of heavy partons in the gluon jet is of the form in (2).

We thus see that a summation of all the diagrams which contribute to the average multiplicity, which was carried out in sixth order in Ref. 6, is equivalent to a more accurate consideration of the kinematic restrictions in the approximation of planar diagrams.

There is a somewhat analogous situation in a calculation of the corrections to the quark fragmentation function in the region \( z \to 1 \). In Ref. 2b it was shown that the summation of these corrections reduces to a change in the argument \( k^2 \) in the effective coupling constant \( \alpha_s(k^2) \). This argument is determined by the maximum quantum-exchange virtuality which is permitted by the kinematics, \( k^2(1-z) \).

I wish to thank V. A. Petrov for fruitful discussions.


Translated by Dave Parsons
Edited by S. J. Amoretti