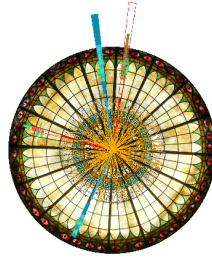


DIS 2015

XXIII International Workshop on
Deep-Inelastic Scattering and
Related Subjects

Dallas, Texas
April 27 – May 1, 2015



Contribution ID: 84

Type: not specified

Studies of Collins asymmetries with the BaBar detector

Tuesday 28 April 2015 11:10 (20 minutes)

Inclusive hadron production cross sections and angular distributions in e^+e^- collisions shed light on fundamental questions of hadronization and fragmentation processes. We present measurements of the so-called Collins azimuthal asymmetries in inclusive production of hadron pairs, in the $e^+e^- \rightarrow h_1 h_2 X$ annihilation process, where the two hadrons (either kaon or pions) are produced in opposite hemispheres.

The data collected by the BaBar detector allows the determination of the Collins fragmentation function as a function of hadron fractional energies and transverse momenta, and can be combined with semi-inclusive deep-inelastic-scattering data to extract the transversity distribution function, which is the least known leading-twist component of the QCD description of the partonic structure of the nucleon.

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Session Classification: WG6 Spin Physics

Track Classification: WG6 Spin Physics