Study of Jet Quenching with $Z + jet$ Correlations in Pb-Pb and $pp$ Collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV

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The correlated production of vector bosons and jets in hard parton scatterings occurring in ultrarelativistic heavy ion collisions provides an ideal probe of the quark-gluon plasma (QGP), a deconfined state of quarks and gluons [1,2]. Final-state jets are created by the fragmentation of outgoing partons that interact strongly with the produced medium and lose energy [3–11], a phenomenon (“jet quenching”) observed at RHIC [12,13] and the LHC [14–18]. The transverse momentum ($p_T$) of the jet is highly correlated (through momentum conservation) with that of the associated Z boson, which is not affected by the medium [19–21] and reflects the initial energy of the parton. The lost energy can be related, via theoretical models, to the thermodynamical and transport properties of the medium [9–11,22–24]. At LHC energies, $Z + jet$ production is dominated by quark jets for $p_T^{jet} \gtrsim 30$ GeV/$c$ [21], the primary subprocess being $q(q) + g \rightarrow Z + q(q)$ [19], hence providing information on the parton flavor (quark or gluon) and kinematics, and allowing detailed studies of the energy loss with a well-defined production process. The $Z$-jet correlations are particularly well suited to perform tomographic studies of the QGP, given the minimal contributions from background channels [20,25–27]. Correlations of jets with isolated photons are accessible at higher rates and carry similar information on parton energy loss [25–29] but suffer from an irreducible background of photons from jet fragmentation [17,30] as well as larger uncertainties arising from the experimental selection of photon candidates.

This Letter describes the identification of $Z + jet$ pairs in $pp$ and Pb-Pb collisions, and the first characterization of parton energy loss through angular and $p_T$ correlations between the jet and the Z, reconstructed in dimuon or dielectron decays. The back-to-back azimuthal alignment of the $Z$ and jets is studied through the difference $\Delta \phi_{Zj} = |\phi^{jet} - \phi^{Z}|$. The $Z + jet$ momentum imbalance is studied using the $x_{Zj} = p_T^{jet} / p_T^{Z}$ ratio and the $p_T^{Z}$ dependence of its mean value, $\langle x_{Zj} \rangle$. The average number of jet partners per Z boson, $R_{Zj}$, is also reported. The analysis exploits Pb-Pb and $pp$ data samples collected by CMS at a nucleon-nucleon center-of-mass energy of 5.02 TeV, corresponding to integrated luminosities of $404 \mu b^{-1}$ and $27.4 \text{ pb}^{-1}$, respectively.

The central feature of CMS is a superconducting solenoid of 6 m internal diameter, providing a magnetic field of 3.8 T. Within the solenoid volume are a silicon pixel and strip tracker, a lead tungstate crystal electromagnetic calorimeter (ECAL), and a brass and scintillator hadron calorimeter (HCAL), each composed of a barrel and two end cap sections. Forward hadron calorimeters extend the pseudorapidity ($\eta$) coverage and are used for Pb-Pb event selection. Muons are measured in gas-ionization detectors located outside the solenoid. A more detailed description of the CMS detector, together with a definition of the coordinate system used and the relevant kinematic variables, can be found in Ref. [31].

The event samples are selected on-line with dedicated lepton triggers and cleaned off-line to remove noncollision events, such as beam-gas interactions or cosmic-ray muons [32]. In addition, events are required to have at least one reconstructed primary interaction vertex.

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events are triggered if two ECAL clusters [33] have transverse energy greater than 15 GeV and $|\eta| < 2.5$, while the $Z \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$ triggers require one muon of $p_T > 15$ GeV/$c$ or two muons of $p_T > 10$ GeV/$c$.

For the analysis of Pb-Pb collisions, the “centrality” (overlap of the two colliding nuclei) is determined by the sum of the total energy deposited in both forward hadron calorimeters [15]. The results refer to the 30% most central collisions, to focus on the region of highest physics interest. After all the other analysis selections, 78% of the Z boson events fall in this centrality range.

The PYTHIA 8.212 [34] Monte Carlo (MC) event generator, with tune CUETP8M1 [35], is used to simulate $Z + \text{jets}$ events, with $p_T^Z > 30$ GeV/$c$ and rapidity $|y| < 2.5$. A sample with a $Z$ boson without any kinematic selection was produced using a next-to-leading order (NLO) generator, MADGRAPH5_AMC@NLO [36]. In the Pb-Pb case, a PYTHIA +HYDJET sample is created by embedding PYTHIA signal events in heavy ion events generated with HYDJET 1.9 [37] and tune HydroQJets. The generated events are propagated through the CMS apparatus using the GEANT4 [38] package. No unfolding is performed for the results presented. The recipe for applying a smearing of the jet $p_T$ resolution is provided in Supplemental Material [39].

Electrons are identified as ECAL superclusters [40] matched in position and energy to tracks reconstructed in the tracker. They must have $p_T > 20$ GeV/$c$, above the trigger threshold, and each supercluster must be within the acceptance of the tracker, $|\eta| < 2.5$. Electron candidates in the transition region between the barrel and end cap subdetectors ($1.44 < |\eta| < 1.57$) are excluded. In $pp$ collisions, the electrons are selected via standard identification criteria [40]. A narrow transverse shape of showers in the ECAL and a low HCAL over ECAL energy ratio are required to reject misidentified electrons. Additional tracking information is used to distinguish electrons from charged hadrons [40]. For Pb-Pb collisions, the identification criteria have been optimized to compensate for the higher background levels in the calorimeters. With these selections, the $pp$ and Pb-Pb electron reconstruction purities (efficiencies) are identical within 1% (10%).

Muons are selected by requiring segments in at least two muon detector planes and a good-quality fit when connecting them to tracker segments. This suppresses hadronic punchthrough and muons from in-flight decays of hadrons. A minimum number of hits in the pixel and strip layers is required, and the reconstructed muon tracks must point to the primary vertex in the transverse and longitudinal directions [41]. The same selections are applied for both $pp$ and Pb-Pb data. In order to suppress the background continuum under the $Z$ peak, mostly originating from uncorrelated simultaneous decays of heavy flavor mesons, the muons are required to have $p_T > 10$ GeV/$c$. In addition, the muon tracks must fall in the acceptance of the muon detectors, $|\eta| < 2.4$.

Jet reconstruction uses the anti-$k_T$ algorithm implemented in FASTJET [42], following the procedure of Ref. [16]. A small distance parameter, $R = 0.3$, minimizes the effects of fluctuations in the underlying event (UE), dominantly formed by soft processes in heavy ion collisions. The UE energy subtraction [43] is performed for Pb-Pb as described in Refs. [15–17]. Cuts are done on MC samples without medium-induced jet energy loss, show no over subtraction of the UE in the Pb-Pb sample. No subtraction is applied in the $pp$ sample, where the UE contribution is negligible. The jet energy is calibrated applying $\eta$- and $p_T$-dependent correction factors derived with the PYTHIA signal sample [44]. Then, dijet and photon + jet balance techniques [45] are used to correct for the residual detector response differences between measured and simulated samples. In addition, a centrality-dependent correction obtained from simulation studies is applied to remove the residual effects from the UE in Pb-Pb collisions. The UE from Pb-Pb data and MC samples are compared using the $p_T$ density [44,46,47], defined as the median of the ratio of the jet transverse momentum to the jet area, for all jets in the event. Given the coarse centrality range used in the analysis, the difference between the measured and simulated Pb-Pb events has a negligible effect on jet reconstruction.

Except in Fig. 4, the resolutions of the measured jet energy and azimuthal angle in the $pp$ samples are smeared to match those of the Pb-Pb sample. The jet energy resolution can be quantified using the Gaussian standard deviation $\sigma$ of the $p_T^{\text{gen}}/p_T^{\text{reco}}$ ratio, where $p_T^{\text{reco}}$ is the UE-subtracted, detector-level jet $p_T$ and $p_T^{\text{gen}}$ is the generator-level jet $p_T$ without any contributions from the UE in Pb-Pb. It is determined using PYTHIA+HYDJET (for Pb-Pb) and PYTHIA (for $pp$) samples and parametrized as a function of $p_T^{\text{gen}}$ using the expression $\sigma(p_T^{\text{gen}}) = C \oplus (S/\sqrt{p_T^{\text{gen}}}) \oplus (N/p_T^{\text{gen}})$, where $\oplus$ stands for the sum in quadrature and the parameters $C, S, N$ are determined from simulation studies. The same parametrization is used to determine the jet azimuthal angle resolution, quantified by the Gaussian standard deviation $\sigma_\phi$ of the $[\phi^{\text{reco}} - \phi^{\text{gen}}]$ difference.

The $Z$ candidates are defined as opposite-charge electron or muon pairs, with a reconstructed invariant mass $(M^{e\mu})$ in the interval 70–110 GeV/$c^2$ and $p_T > 40$ GeV/$c$. The invariant mass distributions of all the dileptons used in the Pb-Pb analysis are shown in Fig. 1. Each $Z$ candidate is paired with all jets in the same event that pass the $p_T > 30$ GeV/$c$ and $|\eta| < 1.6$ selection. Simulation studies show that the jet selection efficiency and the energy resolution are well understood for this kinematic range. Additional energy corrections are applied to the jet $p_T$ to account for residual performance degradations observed in simulation studies. Jets reconstructed within $\Delta R < 0.4$ from a lepton are rejected, to eliminate jet energy contamination by leptons from $Z$ decays.
A systematic uncertainty is evaluated by shifting the interactions not related to the primary Z boson from each candidate Z + jet candidate event. The resulting background jet spectrum is subtracted from the raw jet spectrum, eliminating coincidental Z + jet pairs and ensuring that the final Z + jet observables reflect the correlations of Z bosons and associated jets.

The systematic uncertainties related to Z boson reconstruction are sizable (negligible) in the dielectron (dimuon) channel. Comparing the measured and simulated dielectron invariant mass peaks shows that the average deviation between electron $p_T^{\text{rec}}$ and $p_T^{\text{gen}}$ is 0.5%. A systematic uncertainty is evaluated by shifting the electron $p_T$ by ±0.5%, resulting in changes of $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and $R_{jZ}$ for Pb-Pb $(pp)$ by 0.5% (0.3%) and 3% (0.8%), respectively. The simulated Z dielectrons reconstructed in central Pb-Pb collisions have a $p_T$ resolution of 5% for $p_T > 40$ GeV/c. In Pb-Pb simulated events, $p_T^{\text{jet}}$ is smeared by 5%, resulting in variations of $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and $R_{jZ}$ by 1.5% and 0.8%, respectively. When combining the two lepton results, a weighting is applied to the electron sample, to compensate for the different centrality dependencies of the Z boson reconstruction in the electron and muon channels. The difference between the corrected and uncorrected $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and $R_{jZ}$ values, 0.3% and 5.8%, respectively, is taken as systematic uncertainty.

Simulation studies show that the jet energy scale $(p_T^{\text{rec}} / p_T^{\text{gen}})$ can deviate from unity by up to 2%. Additional deviations can arise from differences between the fragmentation pattern of jets in measured and simulated events. To evaluate the corresponding systematic uncertainty, the jet energy scale is shifted for Pb-Pb $(pp)$ upward by 6% (2%) and downward by 4% (2%). The higher upward variation reflects the relatively high energy scale of quark jets, which contribute more to the Z + jet events than the gluon jets. The relative change in $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and $R_{jZ}$ for Pb-Pb $(pp)$ is 5.4% (2.4%) and 4.6% (2.4%), respectively. Finally, differences between the measured and simulated samples suggest that the jet energy resolution is up to 15% worse in the data. The related systematic uncertainty is evaluated smearing $p_T^{\text{jet}}$ by 15% in the Pb-Pb MC calculations. The $pp$ data are smeared to simulate the poor resolution due to the UE fluctuations in Pb-Pb data. The smearing is performed with the relative resolution $\sigma_{\text{rel}} = \sqrt{\sigma_{\text{Z-Pb,pp}}^2 - \sigma_{\text{pp}}^2}$, where $\sigma_{\text{Z-Pb,pp}}$ and $\sigma_{\text{pp}}$ correspond to the parametrizations described above. A systematic uncertainty is assigned by varying the relative resolution by ±15%. The Pb-Pb $(pp)$ relative change in $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and $R_{jZ}$ due to jet energy resolution is 2.5% and 3.7% (0.5% and 0.7%), respectively. The jet angular resolution correction implies an additional uncertainty on the $pp$ sample, of 0.1% for $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and 0.2% for $R_{jZ}$.

The total systematic uncertainties for Pb-Pb $(pp)$ amount to 6.2% (2.5%) and 8.9% (2.6%) for the $\langle x_{jZ} \rangle$ and $R_{jZ}$ results, respectively, of which 5.7% and 8.0% are uncorrelated between the $pp$ and Pb-Pb results; the uncorrelated uncertainties do not reflect possible differences between $p_T^{\text{rec}}$ and $p_T^{\text{gen}}$.

Figure 2, top, shows the $\Delta \phi_{jZ}$ distribution of Z + jet pairs that pass all the selections; only Z + jet pairs with $p_T^{\text{jet}} > 60$ GeV/c were included to reduce the fraction of events where energy loss effects cause the jet partner to fall below the $p_T^{\text{jet}} > 30$ GeV/c threshold. There are 678 and 232 events that pass the $p_T^{\text{jet}} > 60$ GeV/c selection in $pp$ and in the 30% most central Pb-Pb collisions, respectively. To study if the angular distribution of jets with respect to...
the Z boson is affected by interactions of the parton with the medium, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test was performed using pseudodata generated from identical underlying shapes. This test is useful to quantify shape differences, since it is sensitive to adjacent bins fluctuating in the same direction but not to the overall normalization. No significant difference is seen between the \( pp \) and Pb-Pb distributions; the probability to obtain a KS value larger than that observed in the data, the \( p \) value, is greater than 0.40, even if systematic uncertainties are excluded.

For the \( x_{jZ} \) and \( R_{jZ} \) results, shown in Figs. 2 and 3, only events with \( \Delta \phi_{jZ} > 7\pi/8 \) are used, to select mostly back-to-back \( Z + \) jet pairs; it keeps 63% and 73% of the \( pp \) and Pb-Pb events, respectively. Figure 2, bottom, shows the \( x_{jZ} \) distributions for Pb-Pb and \( pp \) collisions. Jet energy loss is expected to manifest itself both as a shift in the \( x_{jZ} \) distribution and an overall decrease in the number of \( Z + \) jet pairs as jets fall below the \( p_{T}^{\text{jett}} \) threshold. Therefore, the KS test was applied to the \( x_{jZ} \) distribution, and a separate overall normalization \( \chi^2 \) test was applied to the total number of \( Z + \) jet pairs per \( Z \) leading to \( p \) values of \( p_1 = 0.07 \) and \( p_2 = 0.01 \), respectively. The systematic uncertainties and their correlations were included in these calculations. The combined \( p \) value [48] is \( p_1 p_2 [1 - \ln(p_1 p_2)] = 0.0064 \) when including \( Z + \) jet pairs with \( p_{T}^{jZ} > 40 \text{ GeV/c} \), indicating that the two \( x_{jZ} \) distributions are significantly different.

The relative shift between the \( pp \) and Pb-Pb \( x_{jZ} \) distributions is studied using their means, \( \langle x_{jZ} \rangle \), shown in Fig. 3, top, as a function of \( p_{T}^{jZ} \). The minimum \( p_{T} \) of the partner jet imposes a lower limit on the value of \( x_{jZ} \). As \( p_{T}^{jZ} \) increases relative to the \( p_{T}^{\text{cutoff}} \), the kinematic phase space for lower \( x_{jZ} \) opens up, resulting in a shift towards lower \( x_{jZ} \) for higher \( p_{T}^{jZ} \). For all ranges, \( \langle x_{jZ} \rangle \) is found to be lower in Pb-Pb collisions than in \( pp \) collisions, as expected from energy loss models of partons traversing the medium. Also \( R_{jZ} \) is expected to increase as a function of \( p_{T}^{jZ} \), as the \( p_{T}^{\text{cutoff}} > 30 \text{ GeV/c} \) threshold restricts the phase space of jets counted for a given \( p_{T}^{jZ} \) selection. Figure 3, bottom, shows the dependence of \( R_{jZ} \) on \( p_{T}^{jZ} \). The \( R_{jZ} \) values are

![FIG. 2. Distributions of the azimuthal angle difference \( \Delta \phi_{jZ} \) between the Z boson and the jet (top) and of the transverse momentum ratio \( x_{jZ} \) between the jet and the Z boson with \( \Delta \phi_{jZ} > 7\pi/8 \) (bottom). The distributions are normalized by the number of Z events, \( N_{Z} \). Vertical lines (bands) indicate statistical (systematic) uncertainties.](image1)

![FIG. 3. The mean value of the \( x_{jZ} \) distribution (top) and the average number of jet partners per Z boson \( R_{jZ} \) (bottom), as a function of \( p_{T}^{jZ} \). Vertical lines (bands) indicate statistical (systematic) uncertainties.](image2)
found to be smaller in Pb-Pb than in $pp$. As their difference is approximately constant as a function of $p_T^Z$, a relatively smaller fraction of jets is lost in Pb-Pb collisions for larger initial (before traversing the medium) parton energies.

Figure 4 compares the $x_{jZ}$ results to several theoretical calculations, using the same kinematic selections as the data. The Pb-Pb results are compared to three models that incorporate the phenomenon of jet quenching: Jet Evolution With Energy Loss (JEWE) [26], Hybrid [25], and GLV [27]. The JEWEL error bars represent statistical uncertainties, while the widths of the hybrid bands represent systematic variations. A MADGRAPH5_AMC@NLO calculation [36] is also shown.

In summary, correlations of $p_T^Z > 40$ GeV/c $Z$ bosons with $p_T^{jet} > 30$ GeV/c jets have been studied in $pp$ and, for the first time, in Pb-Pb collisions. The data were collected with the CMS experiment during the 2015 data-taking period, at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 5.02$ TeV. No significant difference was found between the distributions of the azimuthal angle difference between the $Z$ and the jet in $pp$ and Pb-Pb collisions. The $x_{jZ}$ distributions indicate that the Pb-Pb values tend to be lower than those measured in $pp$ collisions. Correspondingly, the average value of the transverse momentum ratio ($x_{jZ}$) is smaller in Pb-Pb than in $pp$ collisions, for all $p_T^Z$ intervals. The average number of jet partners per $Z$, $R_{jZ}$, is lower in Pb-Pb than in $pp$ collisions, for all $p_T^Z$ intervals, which suggests that in Pb-Pb collisions a larger fraction of partons associated with $Z$ bosons lose energy and fall below the 30 GeV/c $p_T^{jet}$ threshold. These measurements provide new input for the determination of jet quenching parameters using a selection of partons with well-defined flavor and initial kinematics.

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</table>
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Deceased.

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Also at Institut Pluridisciplinaire Hubert Curien (IPHC), Université de Strasbourg, CNRS-IN2P3.

Also at Universidade Federal de Pelotas, Pelotas, Brazil.

Also at Université Libre de Bruxelles, Bruxelles, Belgium.

Also at Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron, Hamburg, Germany.

Also at Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, Dubna, Russia.

Also at Suez University, Suez, Egypt.

Also at British University in Egypt, Cairo, Egypt.

Also at Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt.

Also at Helwan University, Cairo, Egypt.

Also at Université de Haute Alsace, Mulhouse, France.

Also at Skobeltsyn Institute of Nuclear Physics, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow, Russia.

Also at Tbilisi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia.

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Also at University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany.

Also at Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus, Germany.

Also at Institute of Nuclear Research ATOMKI, Debrecen, Hungary.

Also at MTA-ELTE Lendület CMS Particle and Nuclear Physics Group, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary.

Also at Institute of Physics, University of Debrecen.

Also at Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhopal, India.

Also at Institute of Physics, Bhubaneswar, India.

Also at University of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, India.

Also at University of Ruhuna, Matara, Sri Lanka.

Also at Isfahan University of Technology, Isfahan, Iran.

Also at Yazd University, Yazd, Iran.

Also at Plasma Physics Research Center, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

Also at Università degli Studi di Siena, Siena, Italy.

Also at Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA.

Also at International Islamic University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Also at Malaysian Nuclear Agency, MOSTI, Kajang, Malaysia.

Also at Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnologia, Mexico City, Mexico.

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Also at Piri Reis University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Also at Gaziosmanpasa University, Tokat, Turkey.

Also at Adiyaman University, Adiyaman, Turkey.

Also at Ozyegin University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Also at Izmir Institute of Technology, Izmir, Turkey.

Also at Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Also at Kafkas University, Kars, Turkey.

Also at Istanbul Bilgi University, Istanbul, Turkey.