

# Heavy-quark production and elliptic flow in Au + Au collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$ GeV

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# Heavy-quark production and elliptic flow in Au + Au collisions at $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$ GeV

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We present measurements of electrons and positrons from the semileptonic decays of heavy-flavor hadrons at midrapidity ( $|y| < 0.35$ ) in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV. The data were collected in 2010 by the PHENIX experiment that included the new hadron-blind detector. The invariant yield of electrons from heavy-flavor decays is measured as a function of transverse momentum in the range  $1 < p_T^e < 5$  GeV/c. The invariant yield per binary collision is slightly enhanced above the  $p + p$  reference in Au + Au 0%–20%, 20%–40%, and 40%–60% centralities at a comparable level. At this low beam energy this may be a result of the interplay between initial-state Cronin effects, final-state flow, and energy loss in medium. The  $v_2$  of electrons from heavy-flavor decays is nonzero when averaged between  $1.3 < p_T^e < 2.5$  GeV/c for 0%–40% centrality collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV. For 20%–40% centrality collisions, the  $v_2$  at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV is smaller than that for heavy-flavor decays at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV. The  $v_2$  of the electrons from heavy-flavor decay at the lower beam energy is also smaller than  $v_2$  for pions. Both results indicate that the heavy quarks interact with the medium formed in these collisions, but they may not be at the same level of thermalization with the medium as observed at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Collisions of large nuclei at ultrarelativistic energies produce a state of matter, known as the quark-gluon plasma (QGP), in which the quarks and gluons that are normally bound inside hadrons become deconfined. At the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC), collisions of heavy nuclei at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV produce strongly coupled, dense partonic matter that exhibits strong collective motion [1]. Comparisons of the measured anisotropic flow parameter  $v_2$  with hydrodynamic calculations indicate that the medium expands and flows as a near-perfect liquid [2–4]. The significant suppression of high- $p_T$  particles produced in these collisions relative to scaled  $p + p$  collisions at the same center-of-mass energy also implies that partons lose energy while traversing the medium [5–7]. Both results indicate the formation of the QGP at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV. It is important to map out these two key observations as a function of collision energy to study the transition from normal hadronic matter to the QGP.

Due to the short lifetime of the hot nuclear medium ( $\sim 10$  fm/c), experimental probes of the medium properties must be self-generated during the collision. To explore the formation and properties of strongly interacting matter at lower energy density, a particularly useful set of probes is charm and bottom quarks. At RHIC energies these quarks are produced primarily through gluon fusion in the initial stage of the collision and are therefore present for the full evolution of the system, in contrast to the lighter quarks that can be produced thermally throughout the lifetime of the medium. Prior experiments have established that electrons from heavy-flavor meson decays display a significant  $v_2$  in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV and Pb + Pb collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 2.76$  TeV, indicating that heavy quarks may experience collective motion along with the lighter partons that constitute the bulk of the medium [8–10]. In contrast with early predictions [11,12],

heavy-flavor hadrons are also significantly suppressed in central Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV at a level comparable to light-flavor hadrons [8,9]. The magnitude of the suppression and flow of heavy quarks have proven to be a challenge to many models of parton energy loss in QGP [13–16].

To explore the formation and properties of lower energy density strongly interacting matter, Au + Au collisions with lower center-of-mass energies (62.4, 39, 11.5, and 7.7 GeV) were recorded during the 2010 RHIC run. It was observed that inclusive hadrons and identified light-flavor hadrons display significant flow in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV [17,18]. However, the observed  $\pi^0$  suppression is smaller than in higher-energy collisions [19] for  $p_T < 6$  GeV/c. This may be due to a change in the competition between the Cronin enhancement that is prevalent in lower-energy collisions and the suppressing effects of the hot medium [20]. Cronin enhancement is also observed for electrons from heavy-flavor decays in  $d + Au$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV [21] and is expected to be larger at lower energies [22].

To provide more information on the formation and properties of the plasma produced at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV at RHIC, and the possible role of initial-state effects, this paper presents measurements of the  $p_T$  spectra and anisotropic flow parameter  $v_2$  of electrons from the decays of heavy-flavor (charm and beauty) hadrons produced in Au + Au collisions.

## II. EXPERIMENT SETUP

PHENIX collected approximately 400 million events in 2010 for Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV within  $\pm 20$  cm of the nominal collision point. Figure 1 shows the PHENIX detector system during the 2010 data-taking period. Details about PHENIX detector subsystems can be found in Refs. [23–31].

The beam-beam counters (BBC) provide the measurement of collision time, collision vertex position along the beam axis, and the minimum-bias (MB) trigger information [24]. BBCs are installed along the beam axis 144 cm from the center of PHENIX with a rapidity coverage of  $3.0 < |\eta| < 3.9$ . The difference of the average hit time of PMTs between the north

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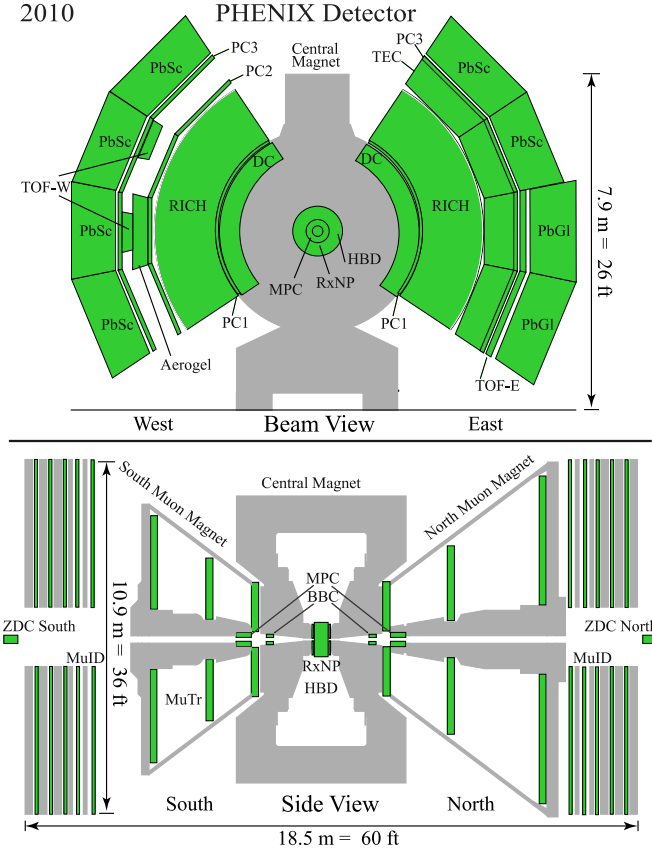


FIG. 1. (Color online) The PHENIX detector configuration for the 2010 data-taking period. The upper panel is the beam view and the lower panel is the side view.

and the south BBC determines the collision vertex position along the beam direction, producing a vertex resolution in the beam direction of  $\sim 0.5$  cm in central Au + Au collisions. The event centrality is also determined by the BBC. For the purpose of this analysis, the total charge in the BBC is divided into four centrality categories: 0%–20%, 20%–40%, 40%–60%, and 60%–86%. The statistical significance of the data in the most peripheral bin (60%–86%) is too low to provide a useful measurement. The MB trigger efficiency is  $85.9 \pm 2.0\%$  of the total Au + Au inelastic cross section at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV. All MB data presented are calculated directly from the MB event sample.

The reaction-plane detector (RXNP) is a plastic scintillator paddle detector installed prior to the 2007 data-taking period [25]. It accurately measures the participant reaction-plane (RP) angle defined by the beam axis and the principal axis of the participant zone. The RXNP is located at  $\pm 39$  cm along the beam pipe from the center of PHENIX with a set of 24 scintillators in each arm.

In this paper, heavy-flavor hadrons are measured indirectly through electrons from the semileptonic decay channel. The two PHENIX central arm spectrometers (CA), which cover  $|\eta| < 0.35$  and  $|\Delta\phi| = \pi/2$  each, provide track reconstruction, momentum and energy measurement, and electron identification (*eID*) for this analysis. Based on the electron's bend in the magnetic field, the drift chambers and pad chambers

reconstruct the track momentum with high resolution. The size and shape of the Čerenkov ring detected in the ring imaging Čerenkov detector (RICH) are used for electron identification over the full momentum range. Pions that fire the RICH above 5 GeV/*c* are statistically insignificant. In addition, the electromagnetic calorimeter (EMCal) measures the energy deposited by electrons and their shower shape. The energy-to-momentum ratio and the quality of matching of the shower shape to a particle template are used for *eID* in a manner similar to the method used in Ref. [9].

In the 2010 run the hadron-blind detector (HBD) was also installed in PHENIX [27]. The HBD is a windowless Čerenkov detector that uses CF<sub>4</sub> gas as the radiator and amplification gas in a container with a radius of  $\approx 60$  cm. The radiator is directly coupled in a windowless configuration to a readout element with a triple gas-electron-multiplier (GEM) stack. The HBD is almost completely insensitive to hadrons up to around 4.5 GeV/*c* when operated with a reverse-bias voltage and therefore brings additional *eID* capability. The HBD can also reduce background electrons from  $\pi^0$  Dalitz decays and photon conversions in the detector material, especially conversions in the beampipe and entrance window into the HBD. A nearly field-free region in the HBD area (currents in the inner and outer coils of the central arm spectrometer magnets flow in opposite directions) preserves the opening angle of electron pairs and, given the large size of the readout pads, signals from a close pair will overlap on a cluster of neighboring pads. The  $\pi^0$  Dalitz and conversion  $e^+e^-$  pairs have small opening angles and can therefore be rejected, while single electrons or electron pairs with large opening angles leave a signal of  $\sim 20$  photoelectrons (p.e.) in the HBD.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

#### A. Candidate electron measurement

To select data recorded with the optimum detector response, we use the average number of electrons and positrons per event in each run and reject those runs where the electron multiplicity deviates from the mean multiplicity by more than  $3\sigma$ . To select good-quality tracks, we follow the same method as described in Ref. [9]. The minimum transverse momentum ( $p_T$ ) for charged tracks in this analysis is greater than 1.0 GeV/*c*. For a track to be identified as an electron candidate, it is also required to fire the RICH and EMCal detectors and to be associated with at least four fired phototubes in the RICH ring. In addition, the  $E/p$  distribution, where  $E$  is the energy deposited in the EMCal and  $p$  is the momentum of the track reconstructed by the drift chambers, is used to select electron candidates. Electrons deposit most of their energy in the EMCal which makes  $E/p$  close to 1, while hadrons deposit only part of the energy in EMCal which causes  $E/p$  to be smaller. A cut of  $dep > -2$  was used, where  $dep = \frac{E/p - 1}{\sigma_{E/p}}$ .

In addition to the above electron cuts, the HBD provides electron identification and background rejection. We apply cuts on  $hbdq$ , where  $hbdq$  is the number of p.e. recorded by the HBD in a cluster. Most of the hadrons and back plane conversion electrons are not associated with an HBD cluster;



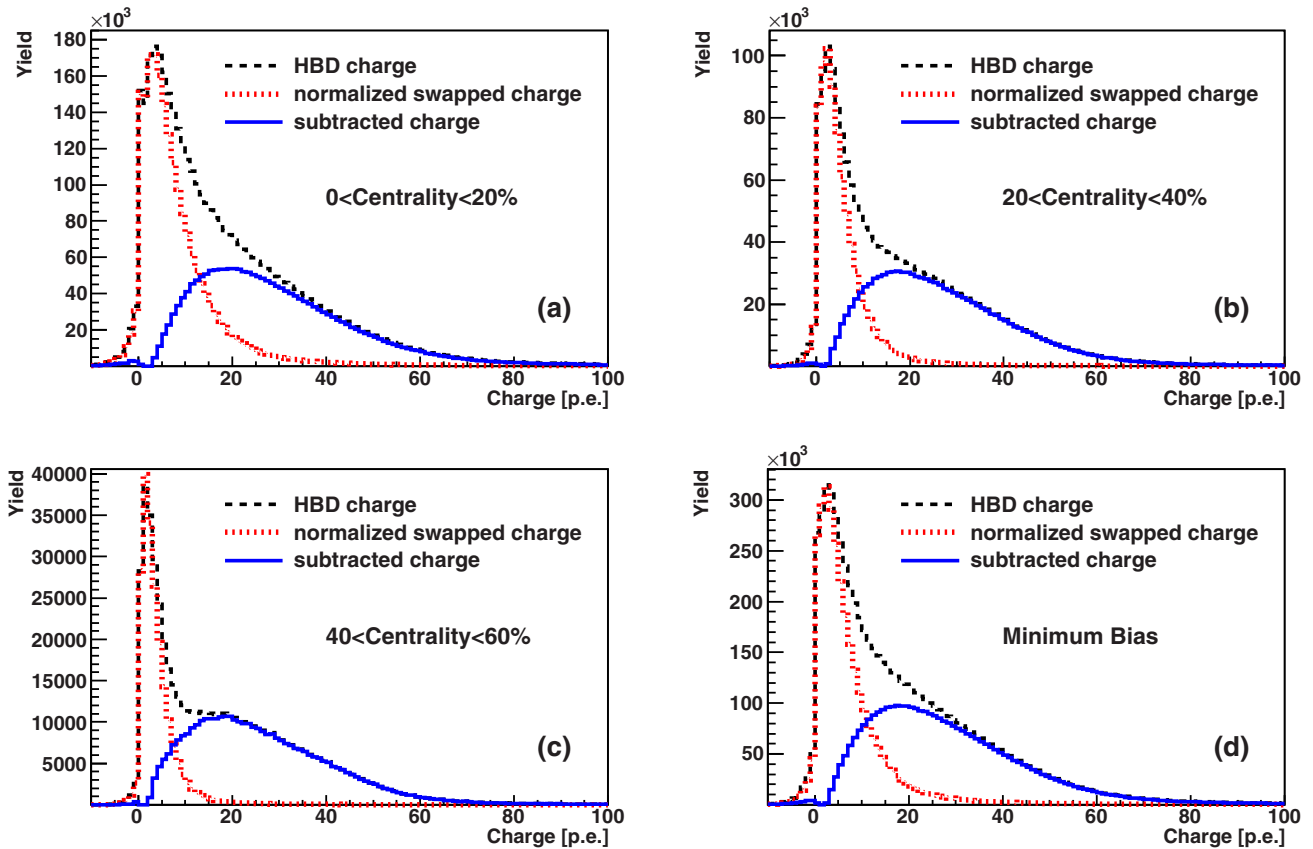


FIG. 2. (Color online) For centralities (a) 0%–20% (most central), (b) 20%–40%, (c) 40%–60%, and (d) MB events, shown are the shapes of the HBD charge distribution (black dashed curves), the swapped HBD charge distribution (red dotted curves), and the subtracted HBD charge distribution (blue solid curves). The swapped HBD distribution can statistically estimate the randomly matched HBD charges.

the rest can be divided into three categories:

- (i) The track is a single electron (our signal) or an electron or positron from an electron pair with large opening angle; either case will produce an  $hbdq$  distribution centered at 20 p.e.
- (ii) The cluster comes from an electron pair with small opening angle which will produce an  $hbdq$  distribution centered at 40 p.e.
- (iii) The track does not fire the HBD itself but is randomly associated with a fake cluster that is formed from the fluctuating HBD background. Charged particles traversing the  $CF_4$  volume in the HBD produce scintillation light and create hits with a small signal in random locations. In this case the  $hbdq$  distribution has low values with an exponential shape. The minimum  $hbdq$  cut removes most of these HBD background hits. A portion of these fluctuate to a larger  $hbdq$  signal but are statistically subtracted as described later in this section.

A cut of  $10 < hbdq < 35$  reduces the backgrounds due to cases (ii) and (iii). A swapping method is used to statistically remove the background from case (iii), i.e., random track associations with HBD background, including conversions that are randomly associated with HBD clusters. The swapped HBD charge ( $hbdq_s$ ) is obtained by matching in software a

track found in the central arm to the HBD in the opposite arm, for example, from HBD hits in the east arm to tracks in the west arm and vice versa. The swapped  $hbdq$  distribution was normalized to the  $hbdq$  in the bins near zero charge. Figure 2 shows the regular  $hbdq$  distribution, the swapped  $hbdq_s$ , and the distribution after subtraction.

The swapped distribution, representing the  $hbdq$  distribution for randomly associated tracks, falls rapidly. The swapped random coincidences produce signals at low  $E/p$  as well as a peak centered at  $E/p$  near 1. The low  $E/p$  distribution is most probably random hadron coincidences and the peak is likely dominated by conversion electrons from the back plane of the HBD having a random coincidence with background clusters in the HBD. After subtracting the swapped distribution from the regular distribution, the  $hbdq$  distribution has a peak around 20 p.e. and a long tail at high charge that is a superposition of the distribution of the single electron signal and the distribution of the close pair signal. To establish the extent of the remaining hadron contamination, the  $dep$  distribution after subtraction is fit with a falling exponential (hadrons) and a Gaussian peaked close to 1 (electrons). The contamination changes with  $p_T$  and centrality; it is largest at low  $p_T$  and more central collisions. At  $p_T$  near 1 GeV/c, the contamination is 2% in the peripheral bin of 40%–60%, 4% in 20%–40% centrality collisions, and 8% in 0%–20% central collisions. For  $p_T > 2$  GeV/c, the contamination is

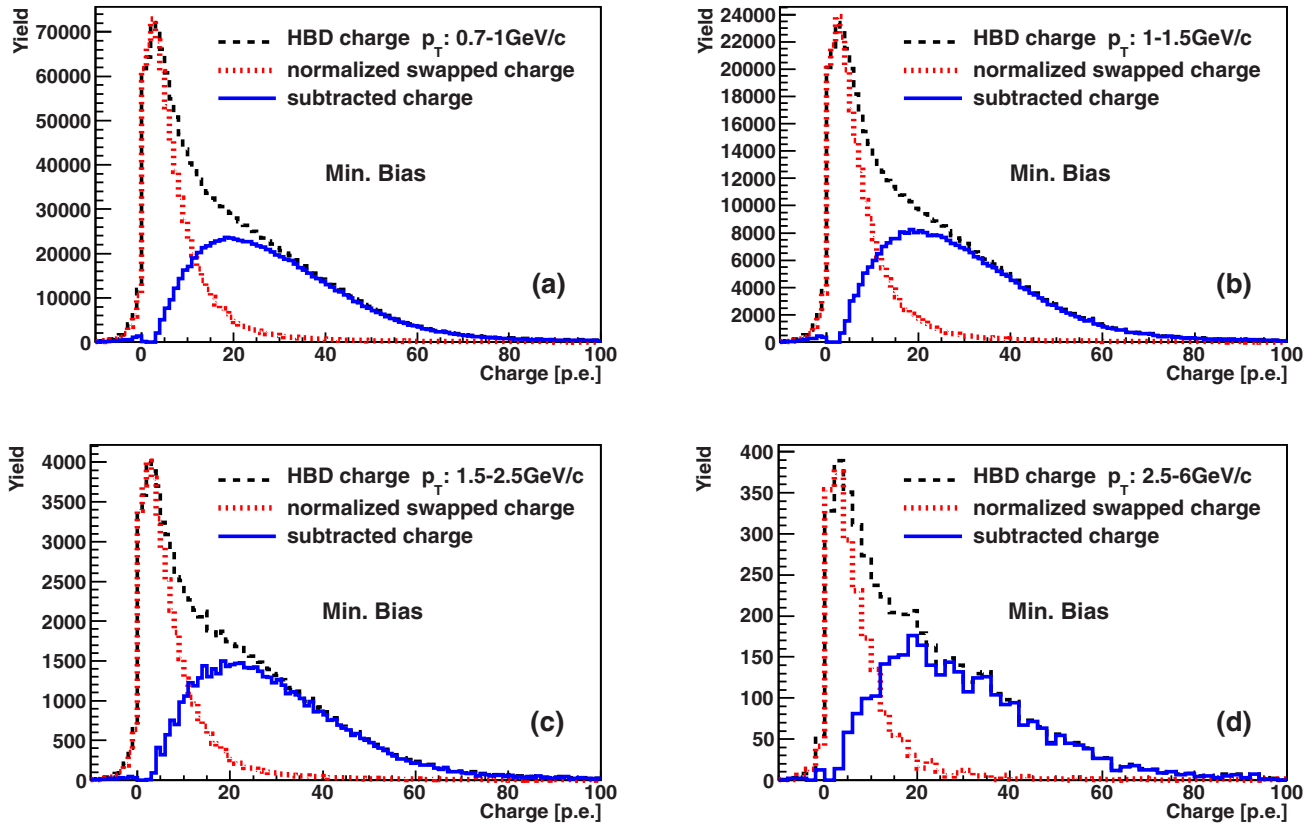


FIG. 3. (Color online) The shape of the HBD charge distribution (black dashed curves), the swapped HBD charge distribution (red dotted curves), and the subtracted HBD charge distribution (blue solid curve) for the indicated  $p_T$  ranges. All plots are for MB events.

approximately independent of  $p_T$  at 2%, 2.5%, and 3% for the centrality bins 40%–60%, 20%–40%, and 0%–20%, respectively. The yield within the range  $10 < hbdq < 35$  of the swapped HBD charge distribution is subtracted at each  $p_T$ .

This swapping technique is repeated for each centrality and all distributions after subtraction are shown in Fig. 2. In addition, the  $hbdq$  distributions (subtracted or unsubtracted) broaden because of increasing fluctuations of the scintillation background in more central events. This will change the efficiency of the  $hbdq$  cut as described in the Sec. III B.

The distributions after subtraction are shown in Fig. 3 for different  $p_T$ . The shape of the subtracted  $hbdq$  distribution does not vary noticeably between 0.75 and 2.5 GeV/c. In central collisions, applying the  $10 < hbdq < 35$  cut rejects 38% of the tracks that satisfied the central arms'  $eID$  selection. This fraction is 35% for peripheral collisions. Some conversions still remain after the  $hbdq$  cut and the swapping subtraction: These are subtracted using a simulated cocktail. The cocktail simulations are described in the Sec. III D.

### B. Simulations

We use a GEANT [32] simulation to estimate the efficiency loss because of the inactive areas and the  $eID$  cuts. This simulation has been demonstrated to match the central-arm particle identification and tracking-chamber performance as described in Ref. [9] and is used to determine the single-electron central-arm acceptance and efficiency. Because single

electrons and close electron pairs have different  $hbdq$  distributions, the efficiency of the HBD cut differs for electrons from different sources. Hence we use a cocktail of a variety of sources, the relative importance of which is constrained by available measured yields of different mesons. Figure 4 shows how well the HBD charge response is described by the HBD simulation. The simulation has a bump at  $hbdq \sim 45$ , which is not observed in the data.

The HBD efficiency is 75% for the single electrons in the simulation (and for electrons from pairs with very large opening angles). Within the simulation, we can examine which electron pairs are removed by the  $hbdq$  cut. This rejects 65% of electrons that come from pairs that have a decay opening angle less than 0.05 radians while the rejection decreases until the opening angles reaches 0.1 rad. For each meson source in the cocktail, the efficiency is separately mapped as a function of  $p_T$  and is used to correct the data.

We embed the simulated HBD single track response into real events to evaluate the centrality dependence of the HBD efficiency. For single electrons, the simulated  $hbdq$  distribution is approximately Gaussian with a peak near 20. This broadens and shifts to a slightly higher average when embedded into a Au + Au event. The embedding efficiency for the fixed cut of  $10 < hbdq < 35$  is calculated as a function of centrality and  $p_T$ . To understand the dependence of the efficiency on these two variables, we integrate over each in turn. Figure 5(b) shows the  $p_T$  dependence integrated over centrality, which is approximately 75% efficient independent

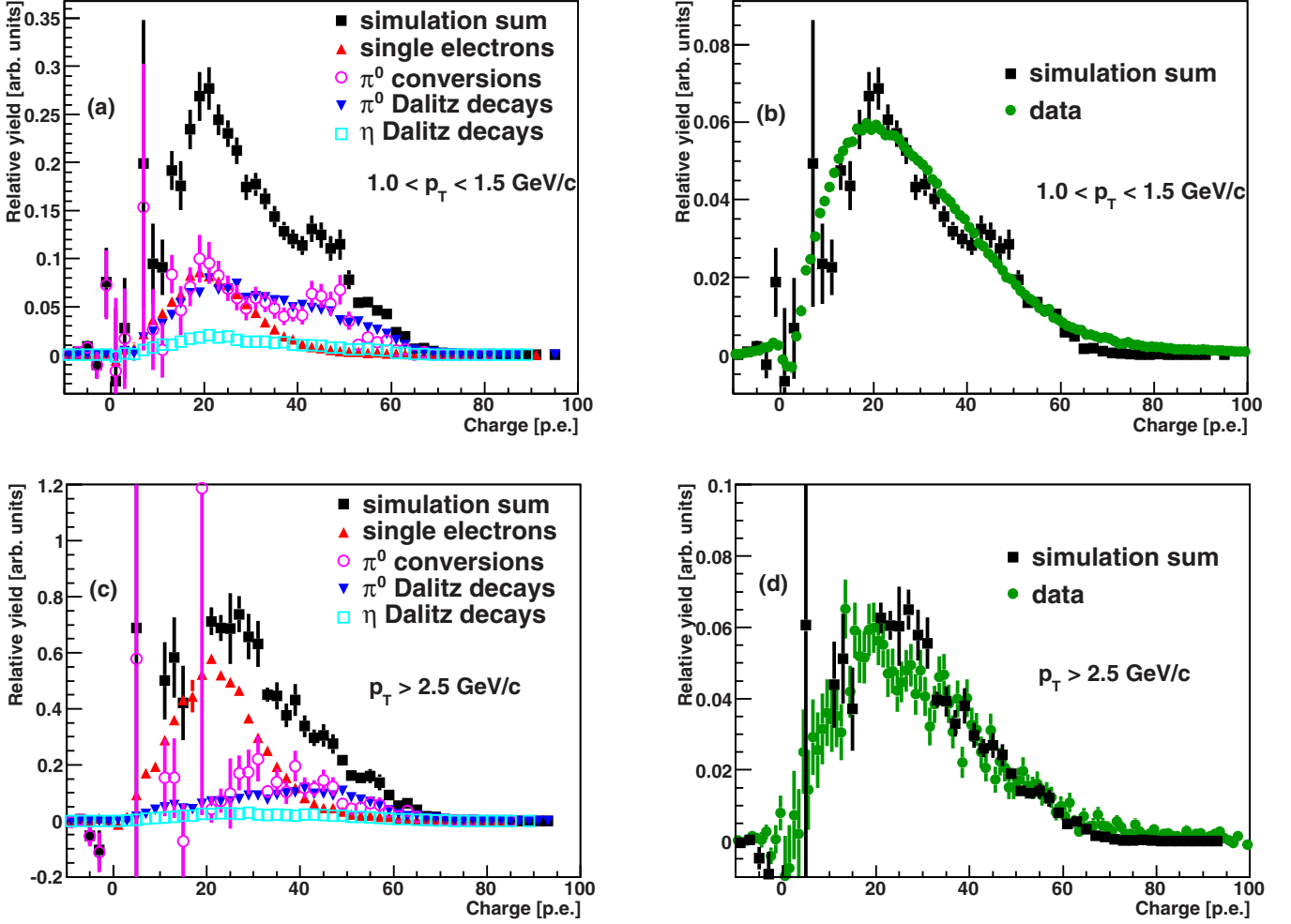


FIG. 4. (Color online) Simulated response of the HBD to different sources of electrons compared to the measured distribution for two different  $p_T$  ranges, (a)  $1.0 < p_T < 1.5$  GeV/c and (c)  $p_T > 2.5$  GeV/c. (Black squares) total simulation, (red triangles) single electrons, (blue inverted triangles)  $\pi^0$  Dalitz decays, (open magenta circles) conversions, (open cyan squares)  $\eta$  Dalitz decays, and (green circles) data. For visual comparison, in (b) and (d) the distributions are normalized to 1 for the same  $p_T$  ranges as in (a) and (c).

of  $p_T$ . This lack of  $p_T$  dependence of the HBD cut efficiency is also observed in other centrality classes, but as seen in Fig. 5(a) the average efficiency does decrease for more central collisions; for central Au + Au events the efficiency has decreased to 65%. As discussed earlier this is because of increased fluctuation of the underlying event background, mostly because of scintillation in the CF<sub>4</sub> gas.

The acceptance and efficiency corrections are applied to the raw yields to produce the invariant yield of the electron candidates measured in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for different centrality bins as shown in Fig. 6, where

$$E \frac{d^3 N}{d^3 p} = \frac{1}{2\pi p_T} \frac{1}{dy dp_T} \frac{1}{A \times \epsilon \times \epsilon_{\text{HBD}}} \frac{N(e^+ + e^-)}{2} \frac{1}{N_{\text{events}}}, \quad (1)$$

where  $N(e^+ + e^-)$  is the number of electrons and positrons after HBD cuts and after both swapped coincidences and hadron background contamination have been subtracted;  $A \times \epsilon$  is the acceptance and efficiency of the central arm with eID cuts, including embedding efficiency; and  $\epsilon_{\text{HBD}}$  is the

efficiency of HBD cuts including embedding. In Sec. III D a cocktail is used to subtract the remaining background statistically.

### C. Azimuthal anisotropy measurement of candidate electrons

For candidate electrons comprising photonic electrons and electrons from heavy-flavor decay, we also measure the azimuthal anisotropy  $v_2$ , which is the second Fourier coefficient of the azimuthal distribution of the candidate electron yield with respect to the participant RP:

$$\frac{dN}{d\phi} = N_0 [1 + 2v_2 \cos 2(\phi - \Phi_{\text{RP}})], \quad (2)$$

where  $\phi$  is the azimuthal angle of the electron track,  $\Phi_{\text{RP}}$  is the azimuthal angle of the participant RP, and  $N_0$  is a normalization constant.

The participant RP is the plane formed by the transverse principal axis of the participants and the beam direction. The RXNP detector is used to measure the participant RP event by



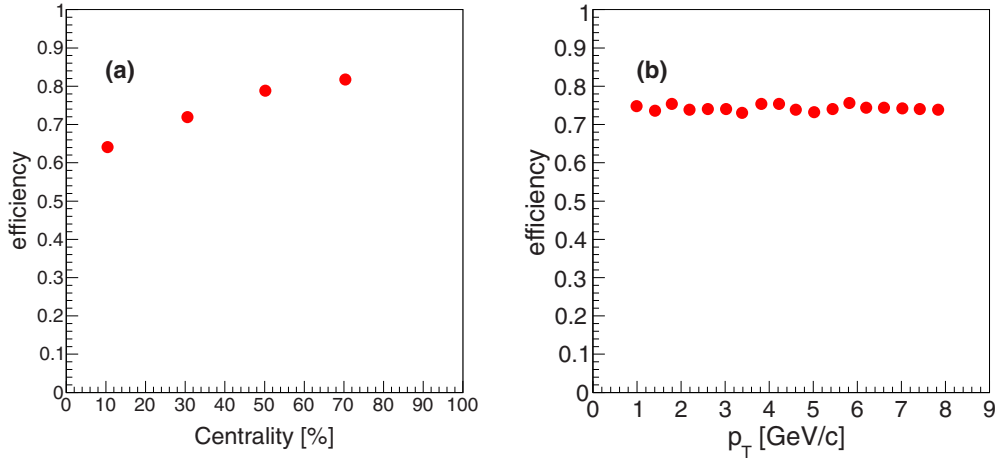


FIG. 5. (Color online) The efficiency of the HBD cut,  $10 < hbdq < 35$ , for a single electron as a function of (a) centrality and (b)  $p_T$ . The efficiency was determined by embedding a simulated single-electron response into the real data.

event. The event plane is constructed in two different windows: the south or north side of the RXNP. From these two planes we can calculate [Eq. (3)] the RP resolution,

$$\langle \cos(2[\Phi_{\text{meas}} - \Phi_{\text{real}}]) \rangle = \sqrt{2 \langle \cos(2[\Phi_m^S - \Phi_m^N]) \rangle}, \quad (3)$$

where  $\Phi_m^S$ ,  $\Phi_m^N$  is the measured RP using only south or north side of the detector. The RP resolution is listed in Table I along with the number of binary collisions,  $N_{\text{coll}}$ , for each of the three centrality classes.  $N_{\text{coll}}$  was determined using a Glauber Monte Carlo calculation.

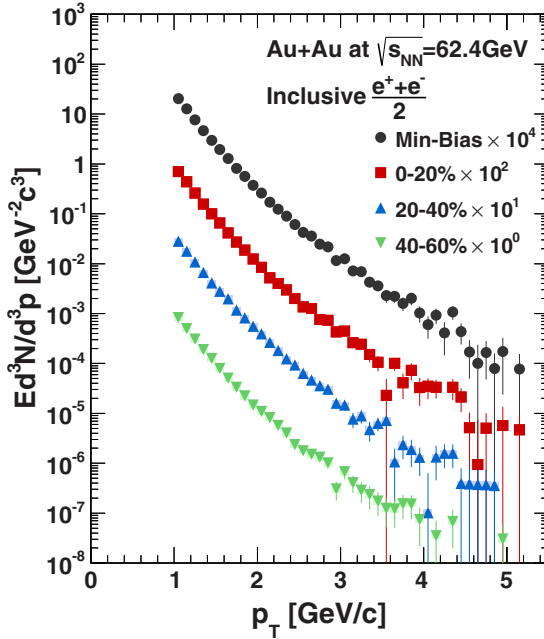


FIG. 6. (Color online) Invariant yield of candidate electrons measured in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for different centrality bins. The yields are scaled by powers of 10 for clarity. The systematic uncertainty is shown as boxes and is, in many cases, comparable to the symbol size.

Figure 7 shows the candidate electron yield with respect to the participant RP ( $\phi - \Phi_{\text{RP}}$ ) for selected  $p_T$  ranges for the 20%–40% centrality bin. The distribution is fitted with Eq. (2) to extract  $v_2^{\text{raw}}$ . By correcting the  $v_2^{\text{raw}}$  with the RP resolution [Eq. (4)],  $v_2$  of the particle distribution with respect to the real RP can be measured,

$$v_2 = \frac{v_2^{\text{raw}}}{\langle \cos(2[\Phi_{\text{meas}} - \Phi_{\text{real}}]) \rangle}, \quad (4)$$

where  $\Phi_{\text{meas}}$  and  $\Phi_{\text{real}}$  are the measured and real RP angle. After correction by the RP resolution with Eq. (4), the candidate electron  $v_2$  for different centrality bins is shown in Fig. 8.

#### D. Cocktail subtraction

As described above, the cut on  $hbdq$  and the swapped subtraction removes most, but not all, of the background from photonic decays. In this section we describe the cocktail method of statistically subtracting the remaining electrons. A Monte Carlo event generator is used to produce electrons from hadron decays; the cocktail includes the photonic sources listed below:

Dalitz decays of neutral mesons:

$$X \rightarrow \gamma + e^- + e^+, \quad \text{where } X = \pi^0, \eta, \eta', \rho, \omega, \phi$$

Dilepton decays of neutral mesons:

$$X \rightarrow e^- + e^+, \quad \text{where } X = \rho, \omega, \phi$$

Conversions of decay photons (including Dalitz) in detector material.

$$K_{e3} \text{ decays } (K \rightarrow \pi^\mp + e^\pm + \nu_e^{(-)})$$

Conversion of direct photons.

TABLE I.  $N_{\text{coll}}$  values and RP resolution for each centrality class.

Centrality class	$N_{\text{coll}}$	RP resolution
0%–20%	$689.9 \pm 78.9$	0.53
20%–40%	$270.5 \pm 27.5$	0.62
40%–60%	$85.7 \pm 9.1$	0.42

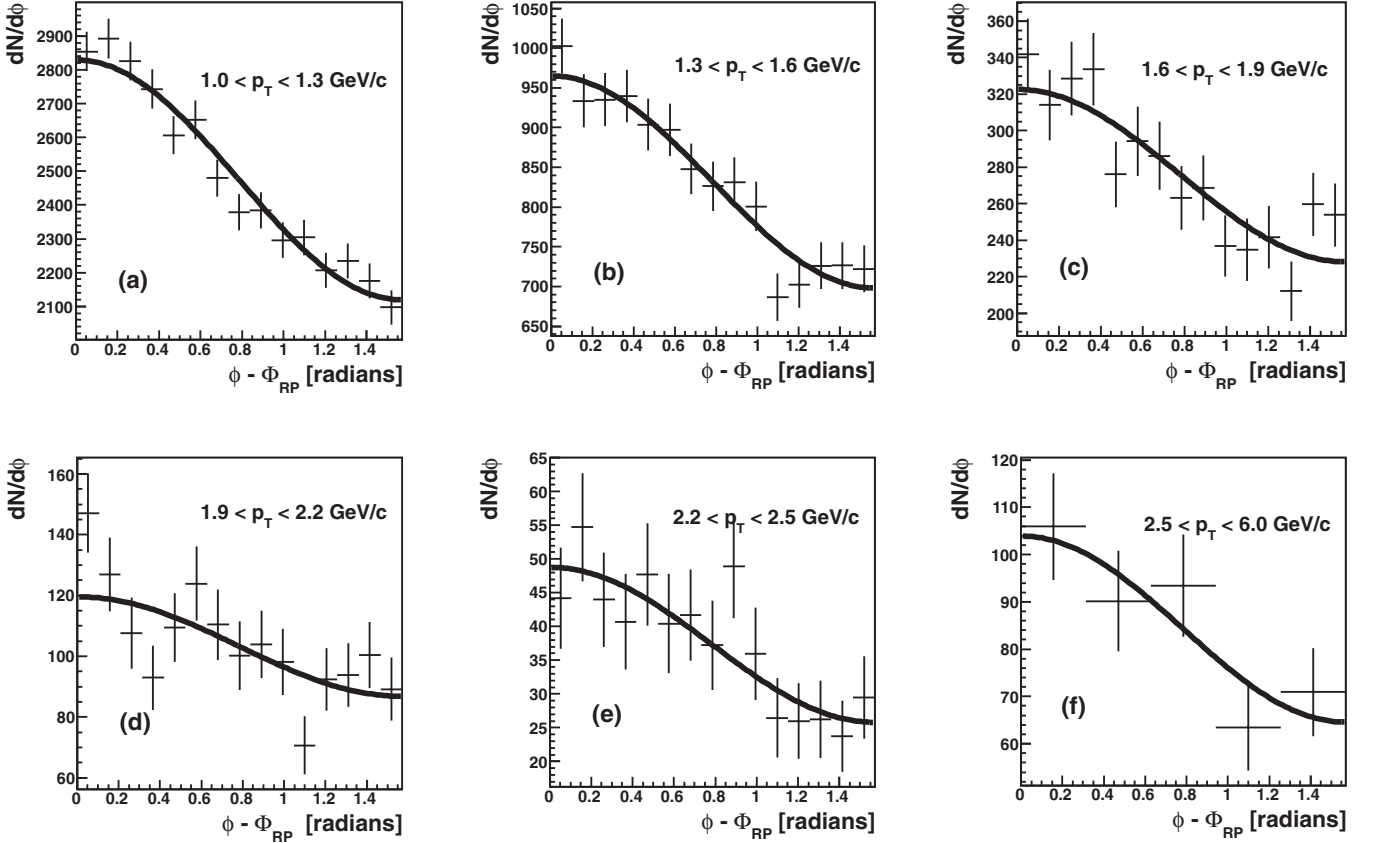


FIG. 7. Candidate electron yield with respect to the RP for different  $p_T$  bins for events with centrality 20%–40% and fitted with the function  $\frac{dN}{d\phi} = N_0[1 + 2v_2 \cos 2(\phi - \Phi_{RP})]$ . The  $p_T$  bins are as indicated.

The cocktail yield ( $Y$ ) is calculated as

$$Y = \sum \epsilon_{\text{decay}}(\text{hadron}, p_T) \times Y_{\text{decay}}(\text{hadron}, p_T) + \sum \epsilon_{\text{conversion}}(p_T) \times R_{CD}(p_T) \times Y_{\text{Dalitz}}(\text{hadron}, p_T) + \epsilon_{K_{e3}}(p_T) \times Y_{\text{decay}}(K_{e3}, p_T) + \epsilon_{\text{conversion}}(p_T) \times Y_{\text{Conversion of direct photons}}(p_T), \quad (5)$$

where  $Y_{\text{decay}}(\text{hadron}, p_T)$  is the yield of Dalitz and dilepton decays of neutral mesons. The efficiency and acceptance for each source are different as described in Sec. III B. For example, the efficiency for Dalitz decays of  $\pi^0$  decreases from 0.5 at  $p_T = 1$  GeV/c to 0.3 at  $p_T = 5$  GeV/c. Heavier mesons have larger opening angles and hence a higher probability for satisfying the HBD cuts. For instance,  $\eta$  decays have an efficiency of 0.6 at  $p_T = 1$  GeV/c and 0.45 at  $p_T = 5$  GeV/c. The conversion electrons are proportional to Dalitz decays with a proportionality factor  $R_{CD}$  based on simulation.  $R_{CD}$  is 0.9 at  $p_T = 1$  GeV/c and increases linearly to 1.4 at  $p_T = 5$  GeV/c. This cocktail is constrained by the measured  $\pi^0$   $p_T$  spectra in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV [19] which is fit to Eq. (6) for each centrality,

$$E \frac{d^3N}{d^3p_T} = \frac{c}{(e^{-ap_T - bp_T^2} + \frac{p_T}{p_0})^n}, \quad (6)$$

where  $a$ ,  $b$ ,  $c$ ,  $n$ , and  $p_0$  are fit parameters. The relative normalization of other mesons to  $\pi^0$  can be obtained from the meson to pion ratios at high  $p_T$  [33–35],

$$\begin{aligned} \eta/\pi &= 0.48 \pm 0.03 \\ \phi/\pi &= 1.00 \pm 0.30 \\ \omega/\pi &= 0.90 \pm 0.06 \\ \eta'/\pi &= 0.25 \pm 0.075 \\ \rho/\pi &= 0.40 \pm 0.12 \end{aligned}$$

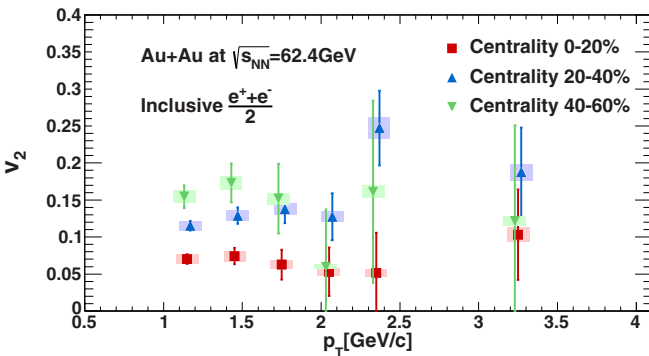


FIG. 8. (Color online) Candidate electron  $v_2$  as a function of  $p_T$  in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for three different centrality bins. The systematic uncertainty is shown as boxes.

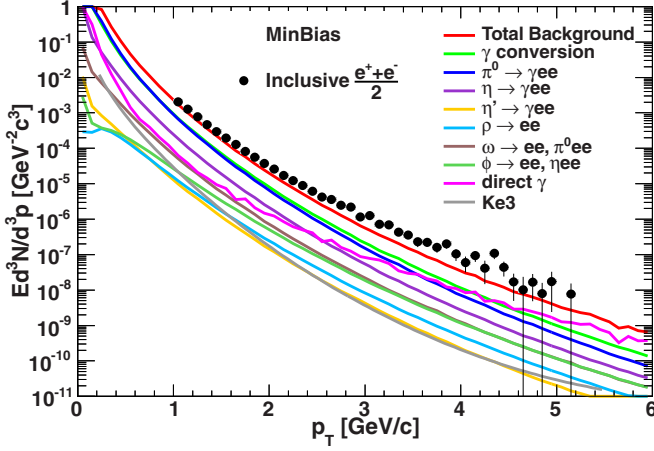


FIG. 9. (Color online) Invariant yield of (black dots) candidate electrons and (solid lines) electrons calculated from different photonic sources in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for MB events.

and the shapes of the spectra assuming  $m_T$  scaling, i.e., replace  $p_T$  with  $m_T = \sqrt{p_T^2 + m_{\text{meson}}^2 - m_{\pi^0}^2}$  with the same parametrization of Eq. (6). Figure 9 shows the cocktail of electrons from different photonic sources in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for MB events. The electrons from photon conversions and from  $\pi^0$  Dalitz decays are the largest contributions to the total cocktail background. The invariant yields of the candidate electrons are shown as black filled circles. There is more background from photon conversions in this measurement than in Ref. [9]. This is the result of the removal of the helium bag and the installation of the HBD in the 2010 data taking, which increases the rate of photon conversions before the tracking detectors. Most of the conversions that are removed using the cocktail are produced before the HBD, i.e., the beampipe, entrance window, and gas. Only a very small portion (3%) of the conversions subtracted using the cocktail come from the HBD itself.

The contribution from direct photons is significant for  $p_T > 3$  GeV/c. For the contribution from direct photons, we use the measured  $p_T$  spectra from Intersecting Storage Rings (ISR)

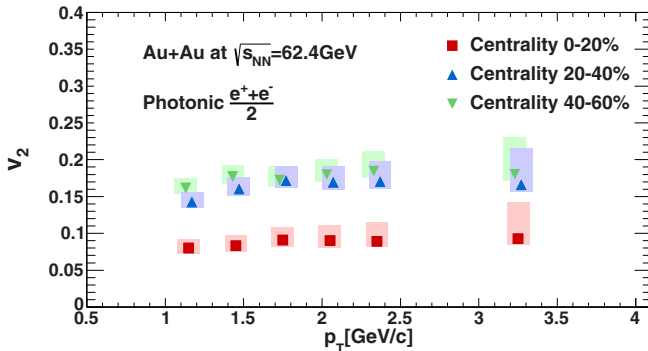


FIG. 10. (Color online)  $v_2$  of photonic electrons calculated as the sum of different photonic sources in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for three different centrality bins. Shaded boxes show the systematic uncertainties.

TABLE II. Systematic uncertainties in the yield of heavy-flavor electrons.

Source	Description
Acceptance	4%
Central arm $eID$ cuts	7%
HBD swapping	0.5%
HBD charge cut	$p_T$ dependent, 5% to 10%
Cocktail	$p_T$ dependent, 10% to 15%
Photon conversions (in GEANT material)	10%
Direct photon yield, $K_{e3}$	20%
	0.25%

R806, R807, R810 experiments [36] and  $N_{\text{coll}}$  scaling for each centrality bin. The electron spectra from  $K_{e3}$  decays at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV are obtained by a full GEANT simulation of the PHENIX detector and the detector tracking algorithm. Because of a limited amount of experimental data on the  $J/\psi$   $p_T$  spectrum at midrapidity in Au + Au collisions at this energy, electrons from  $J/\psi$  decays are not subtracted. However, this background is small compared to the dominant backgrounds from pion decays and photon conversions.

The  $v_2$  of photonic electrons is calculated using a cocktail of sources. The PHENIX measurement of  $v_2$  of charged  $\pi$  in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV [18] is used to estimate the parent  $\pi^0$   $v_2$  distribution. It is known that the measurements of the  $v_2$  of pions and kaons are the same as function of transverse kinetic energy [37], where transverse

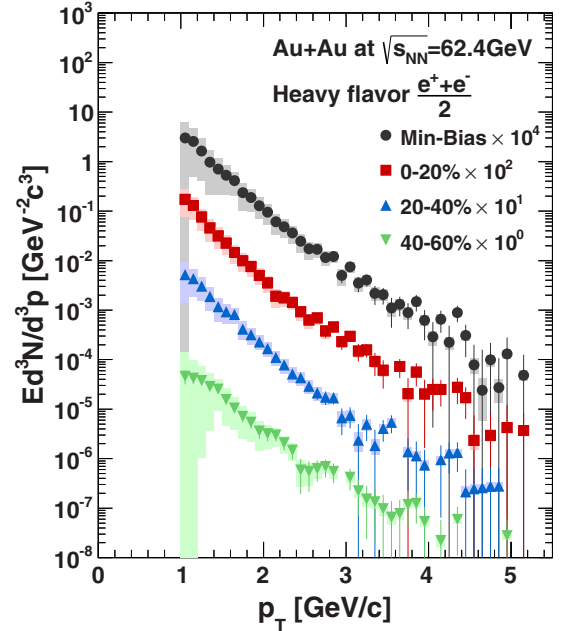


FIG. 11. (Color online) Invariant yield of heavy-flavor electrons measured in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for different centrality bins. The yields are scaled by powers of 10 for clarity. The uncertainty bars (boxes) show the statistical (systematic) uncertainties.

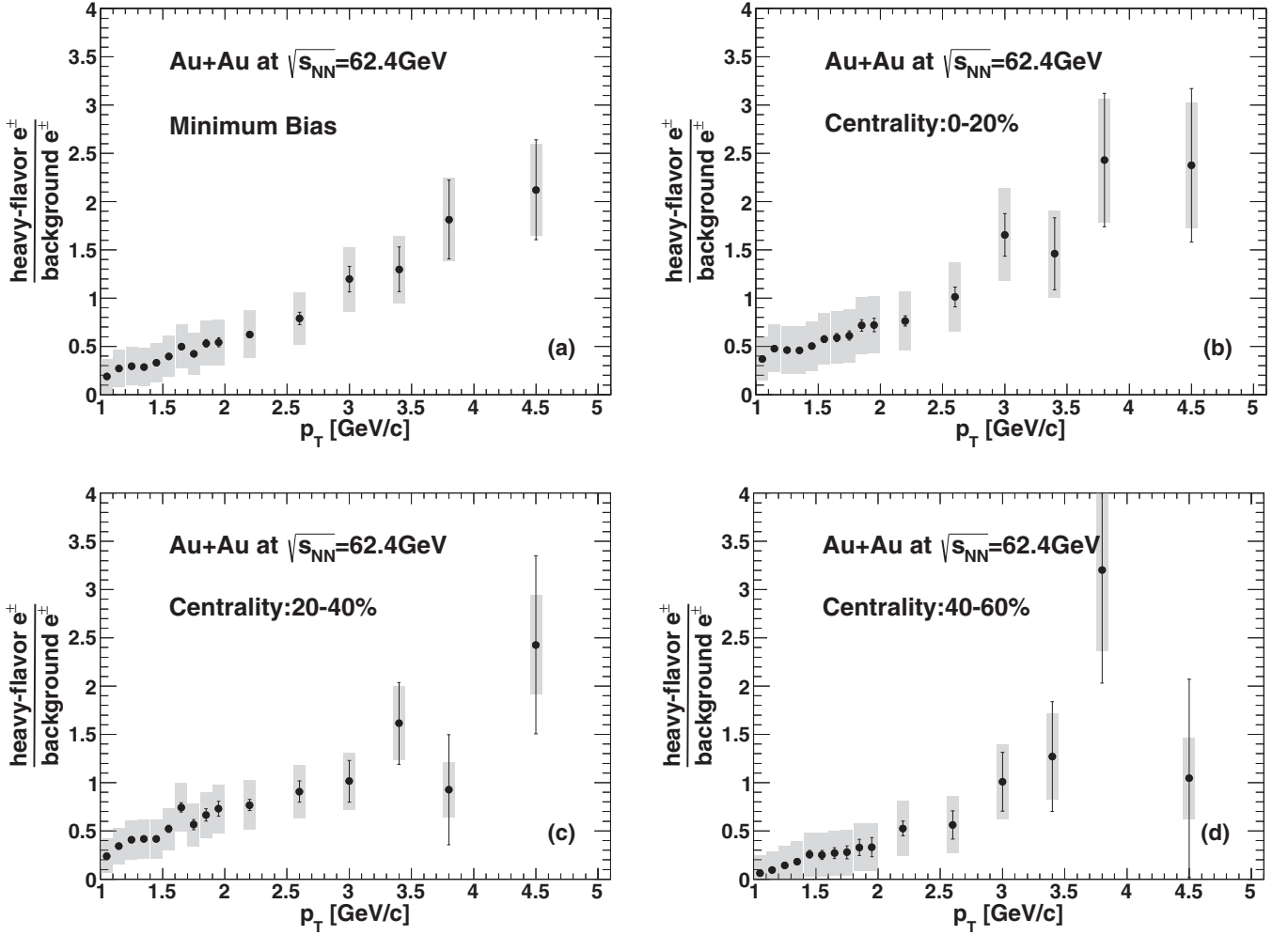


FIG. 12. Ratio of the heavy-flavor electrons (signal) to photonic electrons (background) in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for MB events and the three indicated centrality classes that are used in this analysis.

kinetic energy is  $KE_T = \sqrt{p_T^2 + m_0^2} - m_0$ . Hence we assume that the  $v_2$  of other mesons in the cocktail have the same  $v_2$  values as a function of transverse kinetic energy as neutral pions. We assume the parent  $v_2$  is negligible for electrons from  $K_{e3}$  decays and direct photons. The  $K_{e3}$  background source is small for  $p_T < 3.5$  GeV/c where we report  $v_2$  data. To account for possible flow of direct photons we increased the total systematic uncertainty of photonic  $v_2$  as described in the next subsection.

Figure 10 shows the estimated  $v_2$  of photonic electrons as a function of  $p_T$  for different centrality bins.

### E. Systematic uncertainties

Systematic uncertainties in the candidate electron measurement include an overall 4% contribution because of the acceptance. This was evaluated by calculating the difference in the geometrical matching between the simulation and the real data. Other systematic uncertainties depend on  $p_T$  and are correlated. For example, different choices in  $eID$  cuts, loose and tight, were used to evaluate the systematic uncertainties due to  $eID$  cuts. The variation between these sets is approximately

independent of  $p_T$  at a level of 7%. Alternative choices of HBD swapping normalization contribute 0.5% to the systematic uncertainty, while different methods of selecting on HBD charge produced a  $p_T$ -dependent systematic uncertainty. The alternate cuts include changing the lower threshold of the  $hbdq$  cut from 10 to 7 p.e., changing the upper cut from 35 p.e. to 30 or 40 p.e. These changes contribute a systematic uncertainty of 10% for  $p_T^e < 1.5$  GeV/c and a systematic uncertainty of 5% for  $1.5 < p_T^e < 6$  GeV/c.

Uncertainties in the cocktail method are mainly from the  $p_T$ -dependent uncertainties in the parent  $\pi^0$  spectra which are taken from published data of Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV [19]. The uncertainties from the ratio of light mesons to pion yields are also extracted from published data [33–35].

We also assign a systematic uncertainty of 10% for the amount of material in the GEANT simulation used for the detector in the estimation of electrons from photon conversions, a systematic uncertainty of 20% from the fits of direct photons, and a conservative systematic uncertainty of 50% for the electrons from  $K_{e3}$  decays. However, the 50% uncertainty is on the  $K_{e3}$  contribution, and because this contribution is small, this amounts to only a 0.25% uncertainty on the yield.

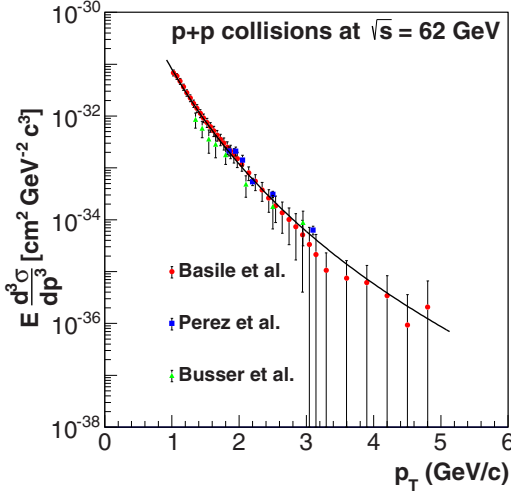


FIG. 13. (Color online) Invariant cross section of heavy-flavor electrons in  $p + p$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.2$  GeV [39–41]. The curve is a combined power-law fit (see Table III).

All these uncertainties are listed in Table II and are propagated into the uncertainties of the heavy-flavor electron spectra by adding them in quadrature.

The systematic uncertainties on the  $v_2$  measurement include the uncertainty in electron candidate  $v_2$  and the uncertainty in the photonic electron  $v_2$ . The uncertainty in electron candidate  $v_2$  is because of the RP resolution (5%). The systematic uncertainty is 8% for central  $v_2$  and 5% for midcentral photonic electrons. We find a systematic uncertainty of 4% due to the uncertainties of the relative ratio of different photonic-electron sources to the photonic electron  $v_2$ .

We also assign an additional systematic uncertainty because of possible flow of direct photons as observed in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV [38], which was assumed to be zero in our calculation of photonic flow. This additional systematic uncertainty was calculated assuming that direct photon flow is the same as that of  $\pi^0$ .

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Heavy-flavor electron yield

To extract the invariant yield of heavy-flavor (hf) electrons, the photonic electron background is subtracted from the invariant yield of candidate electrons for each centrality bin.

$$E \frac{d^3 N_{\text{hf}}}{d^3 p} = E \frac{d^3 N_{\text{inclusive}}}{d^3 p} - E \frac{d^3 N_{\text{photonic}}}{d^3 p}, \quad (7)$$

i.e., the data shown in Fig. 6 minus the centrality-dependent cocktail comparable to Fig. 9. Figure 11 shows the invariant yield of heavy-flavor electrons as a function of  $p_T$  in four different centrality ranges: MB, 0 to 20%, 20%–40%, and 40%–60%. The error bars and error boxes represent, respectively, the statistical and systematic uncertainties in the heavy-flavor electron measurement.

Figure 12 shows the signal-to-background ratio  $S/B$  [Eq. (8)] in MB events and for the three centrality classes

TABLE III. Systematic uncertainties on quantities used to determine the yield of heavy-flavor electrons in  $p + p$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV [39–41], as shown in Fig. 13.

$p_T$ (GeV/c)	Fit value ( $\text{cm}^2 \text{GeV}^{-2} c^3$ )	Relative uncertainty
1.1	$4.82 \times 10^{-32}$	0.061
1.3	$1.88 \times 10^{-32}$	0.038
1.5	$7.89 \times 10^{-33}$	0.038
1.7	$3.55 \times 10^{-33}$	0.045
1.9	$1.69 \times 10^{-33}$	0.049
2.1	$8.44 \times 10^{-34}$	0.052
2.3	$4.40 \times 10^{-34}$	0.055
2.5	$2.39 \times 10^{-34}$	0.061
2.7	$1.34 \times 10^{-34}$	0.070
2.9	$7.74 \times 10^{-35}$	0.083
3.1	$4.60 \times 10^{-35}$	0.10
3.4	$2.21 \times 10^{-35}$	0.13
3.8	$8.92 \times 10^{-36}$	0.17
4.2	$3.87 \times 10^{-36}$	0.22
4.6	$1.79 \times 10^{-36}$	0.27
5.0	$8.72 \times 10^{-37}$	0.32

used in this analysis.

$$S/B = \frac{N_{\text{hf}}}{N_{\text{photonic}}}, \quad (8)$$

where  $N_{\text{hf}}$  is the yield of heavy-flavor electrons,  $N_{\text{photonic}}$  is the yield of photonic electrons, i.e., the data shown in Fig. 11 divided by the centrality-dependent cocktail comparable to Fig. 9.  $S/B$  increases with  $p_T$ . At low  $p_T$  the candidate electrons are primarily from the photonic sources. At high  $p_T$ , electrons from heavy-flavor meson decays start to dominate the candidate electron yield.

As a baseline, there are three available  $p + p$  results from the ISR [39–41] that are shown in Fig. 13. These data sets are simultaneously fit to a power-law function:

$$\text{yield} = \frac{a}{(p_T + b)^n}, \quad (9)$$

where the parameters are determined to be  $a = 1.21 \pm 3.55 \times 10^{-28}$ ,  $b = 1.015 \pm 0.39$  GeV/c, and  $n = 10.45 \pm 1.43$ , as shown in Fig. 13. Table III shows the value of the fit and its relative uncertainty for each  $p_T$  point used to calculate  $R_{AA}$ .

To compare the Au + Au data with  $p + p$  results, we divide the Au + Au data by the number of binary collisions,  $N_{\text{coll}}$ . For each of the three centrality classes, Table I lists the  $N_{\text{coll}}$  values. Figure 14 compares the invariant yield of the heavy-flavor electrons per binary collision in the 0%–20%, 20%–40%, and 40%–60% centrality bins and MB data in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV. The invariant cross section of heavy-flavor electrons in  $p + p$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.2$  GeV is derived from the highest statistics heavy-flavor electron measurement [39] that was performed at the ISR. These results are scaled by the inelastic cross section at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.2$  GeV,  $\sigma_{pp} = 35.9$  mb [42], and plotted in Fig. 14(e).

The fixed-order-plus-next-to-leading-log (FONLL) prediction [43] (red curve) is also shown in Fig. 14. In Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV, the yield of heavy-flavor



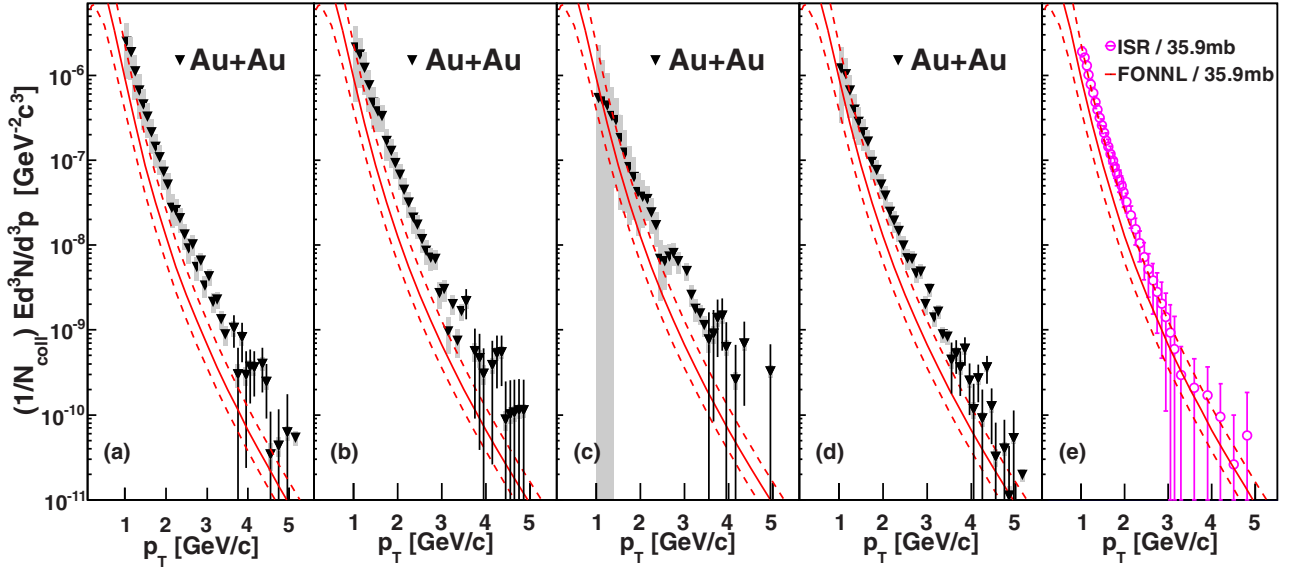


FIG. 14. (Color online) Invariant yield of heavy-flavor electrons per binary collisions in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.2$  GeV for (a) MB, (b) 0%–20%, (c) 20%–40%, (d) 40%–60%, and (e)  $p + p$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV measured in ISR experiments. The curves are (red solid) FONLL calculations and (red dash) upper and lower limits.

electrons per binary collision is higher than the ISR results in  $p + p$  collisions, while the ISR  $p + p$  results are consistent with the upper limit of the FONLL prediction.

To further study the modification of the yield of heavy-flavor electrons in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV, the invariant yield per binary collision  $N_{coll}$  of heavy-flavor electrons is integrated across three  $p_T$  bins as shown in Fig. 15. At  $N_{coll} = 1$  the  $p + p$  points come from the three published ISR measurements [39–41].

At low  $p_T$  ( $1.5 < p_T < 2.5$  GeV/c), an enhancement of the heavy-flavor electron yield is observed in the 0%–20% and 20%–40% centrality bins relative to the yield in  $p + p$  collisions, while the more peripheral 40%–60% centrality bin is consistent with the  $p + p$  yield, within uncertainties. In the higher  $p_T$  ranges,  $2.5 < p_T < 3.5$  GeV/c and  $3 < p_T < 5$  GeV/c, enhancement is observed relative to  $p + p$  in all centrality bins. A scenario with only heavy-quark energy loss in a deconfined medium would show a pattern of increasing suppression with collision centrality, contrary to what is observed here. This suggests that other mechanisms are present.

We also calculate the nuclear-modification factor  $R_{AA}$ , which is the ratio of the yield per binary collision in Au + Au

reactions divided by the yield in  $p + p$  collisions. The  $R_{AA}$  vs  $p_T$  are shown in Fig. 16 for three different centrality classes and for MB. The yield in  $p + p$  collisions is taken from the combined fit to the three ISR data sets [39–41]. The statistical uncertainty on  $R_{AA}$  is taken from the statistical uncertainty on the heavy-flavor electron yield measured in Au + Au collisions shown in Fig. 11. The systematic uncertainty on  $R_{AA}$  is a quadrature sum of the systematic uncertainty on the heavy-flavor electron yield in Au + Au collisions and the statistical uncertainty on the fit used to represent the denominator. At low  $p_T$ , where the fit to the  $p + p$  denominator is relatively well constrained, the systematic uncertainty on  $R_{AA}$  is dominated by the systematic uncertainty on the measured heavy-flavor electron yield in Au + Au. At high  $p_T$ , where the  $S/B$  ratio for heavy-flavor electrons in Au + Au collisions is relatively high and the fit representing the  $p + p$  denominator is not well constrained, the systematic uncertainty on  $R_{AA}$  is dominated by the uncertainty propagated from the fit parameters. The  $R_{AA}$  is consistently larger than unity with the exception of low- $p_T$  data in peripheral collisions. In contrast to the heavy-flavor results, the  $\pi^0$  data at 62 GeV show a suppression that increases with centrality [19].

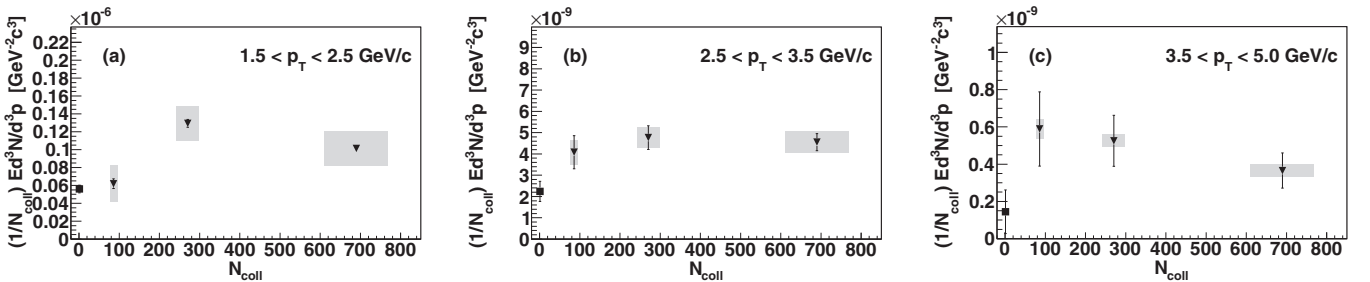


FIG. 15. Integrated invariant yield per binary collision vs  $N_{coll}$  for heavy-flavor electrons in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for the indicated  $p_T$  ranges. The data point at  $N_{coll} = 1$  is for  $p + p$  collisions.

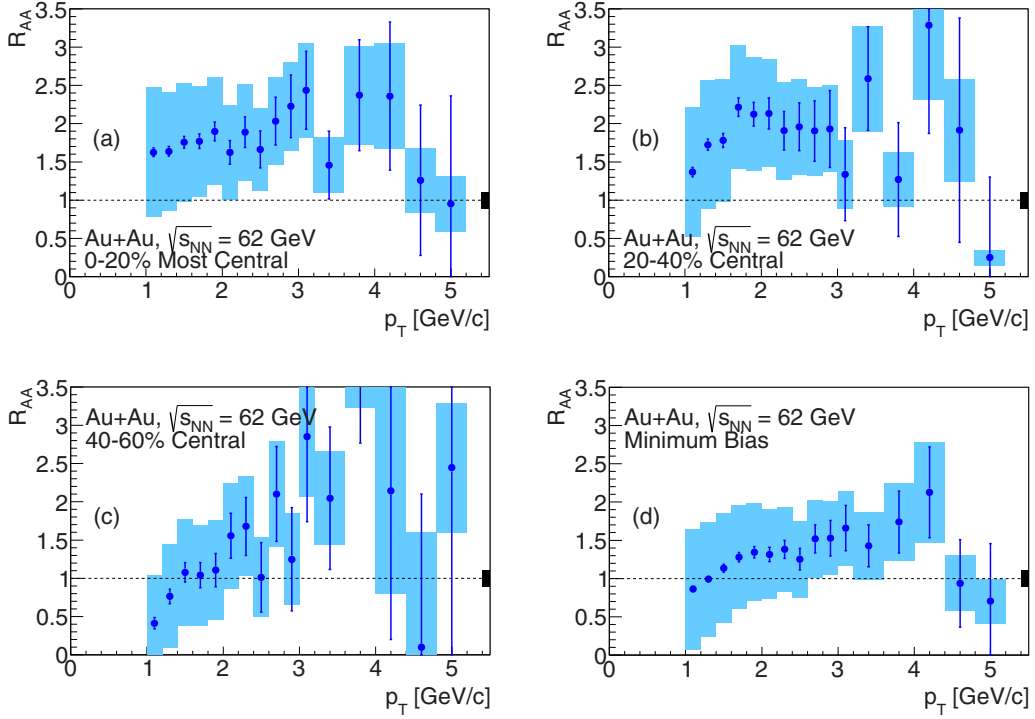


FIG. 16. (Color online) The  $R_{AA}$  for electrons from heavy-flavor decays in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for the indicated centralities. The error bars (boxes) represent the statistical (systematic) uncertainties. The global uncertainty due to the uncertainty in  $N_{coll}$  for each centrality is given by the box on the right side of each plot.

These  $R_{AA}$  values for electrons from heavy-flavor decay in Au + Au collisions at 62.4 GeV are compared to other  $R_{AA}$  results from  $d + Au$ ,  $Cu + Cu$ , and Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV (data from Refs. [9,21,44]), as shown in Fig. 17. At 200 GeV the heavy-flavor  $R_{AA}$  first increases with centrality and then decreases, consistent with a competition between two mechanisms. At 62.4 GeV the competition, if present, favors heavy-flavor enhancement over suppression. This is consistent with previous results with hadrons where the Cronin enhancement increases as the collision energy decreases [45]. This competition among Cronin enhancement, flow, and suppression produces a different pattern for  $R_{AA}$  for light mesons (Fig. 18).

To estimate how rapidly the Cronin effect on heavy-flavor production could change from  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV to 62 GeV, we have performed PYTHIA calculations with different numerical  $k_T$  parameters to estimate the possible size of the enhancement due to an increase in initial-state multiple scattering. Increasing  $k_T$  from 0 to 1.5 GeV/c enhances the yield of electrons from charm decay by a factor of 2.5 for  $2 < p_T < 3$  GeV/c. At 200 GeV this enhancement is only a factor of 1.5. The observed enhancement of heavy-flavor electrons could be due to less energy loss in the medium at 62.4 GeV, a larger Cronin enhancement in the initial state at 62.4 GeV, or a combination of these factors. In addition to the Cronin enhancement, gluon antishadowing may increase the charm cross section in

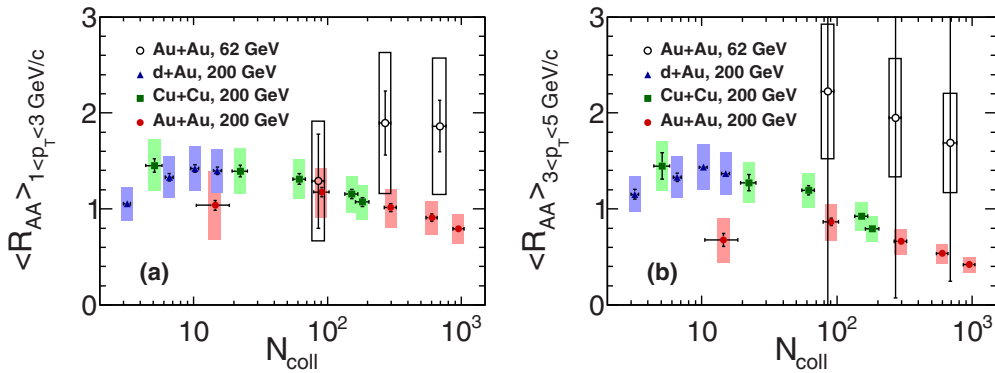


FIG. 17. (Color online) The  $R_{AA}$  values for electrons from heavy-flavor decay in Au + Au collisions at 62.4 GeV with the  $R_{AA}$  results from  $d + Au$ ,  $Cu + Cu$ , and Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV (data from Refs. [9,21], as shown earlier in [44]). The error bars (boxes) represent the statistical (systematic) uncertainties. The  $p_T$  ranges are as indicated: (a)  $1 < p_T < 3$  GeV/c and (b)  $3 < p_T < 5$  GeV/c.

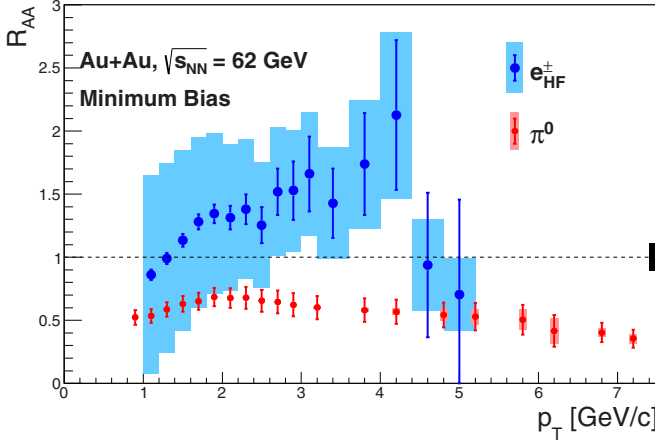


FIG. 18. (Color online) The  $R_{AA}$  values from heavy-flavor decay for electrons and  $\pi^0$  [19] in Au + Au collisions at 62.4 GeV. The error bars (boxes) show the statistical (systematic) uncertainties.

Au + Au collision at 62.4 GeV and cause the overall enhancement of the heavy-flavor electron yield per  $N_{\text{coll}}$  compared to scaled  $p + p$  collisions.

Vitev has predicted  $R_{AA}$  using his model of heavy-flavor energy loss [13,46]. Figure 19 shows that these calculations, which include both energy loss of heavy quarks inside a QGP as well as dissociation of D and B mesons, significantly underpredict the measured data.

As a complementary study of the change of the heavy-flavor electron yield from peripheral to central collisions, we measure  $R_{CP}$  as defined by:

$$R_{CP} = \frac{\langle N_{\text{coll}}^{\text{peripheral}} \rangle \times dN_{\text{AuAu,central}}^e / dp_T}{\langle N_{\text{coll}}^{\text{central}} \rangle \times dN_{\text{AuAu,peripheral}}^e / dp_T}. \quad (10)$$

The yields from the 0%–20% centrality bin and 40%–60% centrality bin are used for the numerator and denominator of  $R_{CP}$ , respectively. Figure 20 shows  $R_{CP}$  is above 1 for  $p_T$

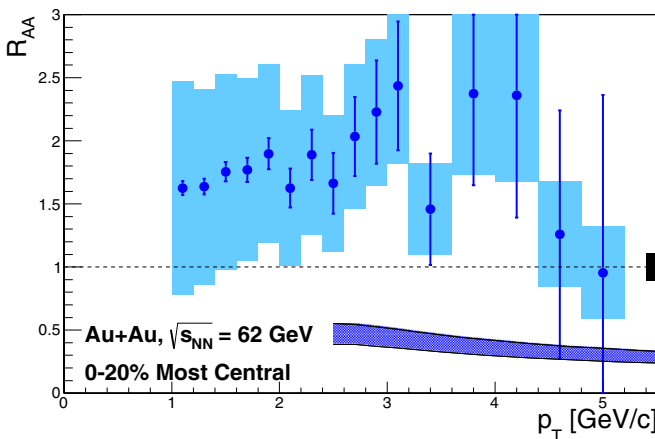


FIG. 19. (Color online) The nuclear modification factor  $R_{AA}$  for electrons from heavy-flavor decays in 0%–20% central Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV compared to predictions (dark-blue band) from Vitev *et al.* [13,46].

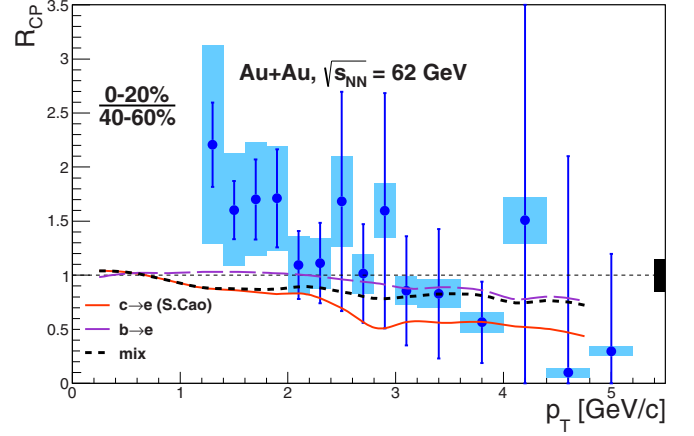


FIG. 20. (Color online) Heavy-flavor electron  $R_{CP}$  between centrality 0%–20% and 40%–60% in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV. The curves are calculated using a model based on energy loss [47,48].

below 1 GeV/c and is consistent with 1 at higher  $p_T$ . The curves in Fig. 20 are calculated using a model based on energy loss [47,48].

### B. Heavy-flavor electron $v_2$

Heavy-flavor electron  $v_2$  is calculated from candidate electron  $v_2$ , photonic electron  $v_2$ , and  $S/B$  as:

$$v_2^{\text{hf}} = v_2^{\text{inc}} \left( 1 + \frac{1}{S/B} \right) - v_2^{\text{pho}} \frac{1}{S/B}. \quad (11)$$

Figure 21 shows the measured  $v_2$  results for candidate electrons, photonic and heavy-flavor electrons in the 20%–40% centrality bin to illustrate their relative magnitude. Figure 22 shows the  $v_2$  of heavy-flavor electrons in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV in 0%–20%, 20%–40% and 40%–60% centrality bins. In the 20%–40% centrality bin, a nonzero  $v_2$  of heavy-flavor electrons is observed for  $p_T > 1.5$  GeV/c, which may indicate that charm quarks in the  $p_T$  range

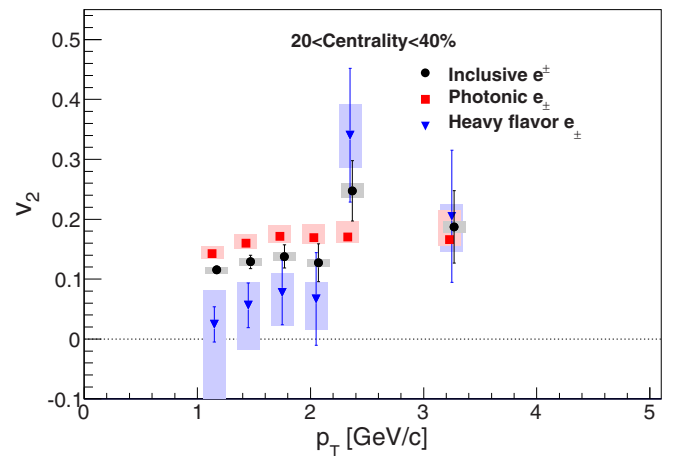


FIG. 21. (Color online) Candidate (inclusive), photonic, and heavy-flavor electron  $v_2$  in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for 20%–40% centrality.

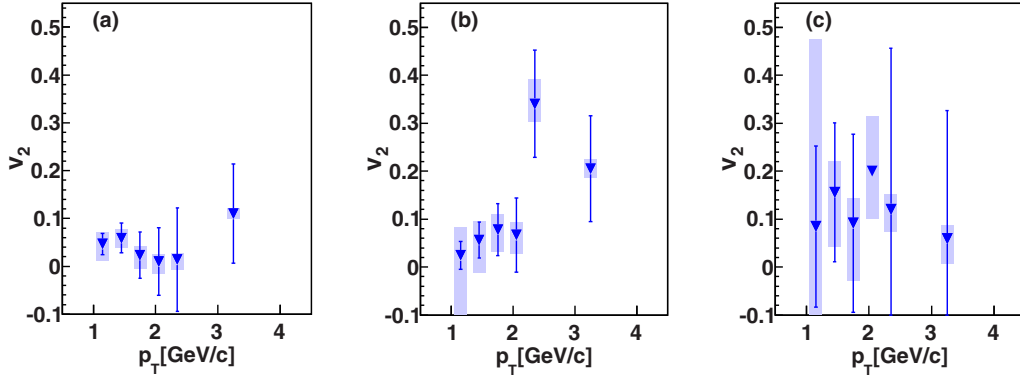


FIG. 22. (Color online) Heavy-flavor electron  $v_2$  in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV for (a) 0%–20%, (b) 20%–40%, and (c) 40%–60% centrality bins.

of this analysis experience some degree of collective motion along with the bulk medium.

To gain further insight into the possible differences in coupling to the medium due to quark mass, the  $v_2$  of heavy-flavor electrons and  $\pi^0$  for  $1.3 < p_T < 2.5$  GeV/c in Au + Au collisions as a function of collision energy are compared in Fig. 23 for 0%–20% centrality and 20%–40% centrality. The plots show that both heavy-flavor electrons and  $\pi^0$  experience anisotropic flow in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV and 200 GeV. The  $v_2$  for heavy-flavor electrons is lower than that for  $\pi^0$ . We note that the  $\pi^0$  is a fully reconstructed meson, while the electrons from heavy-flavor decays are daughter products from the decay of charm and bottom mesons and baryons, and therefore the electron  $p_T$  does not necessarily represent the  $p_T$  of the parent hadron.

Because the heavy-flavor electrons are decay products from heavy-flavor hadrons which may come from recombination of a heavy quark with a light quark from the bulk [48], heavy-flavor hadrons could acquire  $v_2$  as a consequence of recombination. Hence, a nonzero  $v_2$  of heavy-flavor electrons does not necessarily imply a nonzero  $v_2$  of charm quarks. It will be necessary to compare our data with theoretical models with heavy-quark flow for further understanding of the collective motion of the heavy quarks in the medium at 62.4 and 200 GeV.

Figure 24 shows such a comparison between our  $v_2$  results and theoretical calculations [47,48], which use the framework of a modified Langevin equation [49] coupled to a (2 + 1)-dimensional viscous hydrodynamic model [50]. The classical Langevin approach is improved by adding both

quasielastic scattering and medium-induced gluon radiation for heavy-quark energy loss inside the QGP medium. Before the Langevin evolution, heavy quarks are initialized with a leading-order perturbative quantum chromodynamics calculation [51] coupled to the nuclear parton distribution function provided in Ref. [52]. After traversing the QGP, the heavy quarks hadronize into heavy mesons according to a hybrid model of instantaneous coalescence [53] and PYTHIA 6.4 [54] fragmentation. One set of initial conditions for the hydrodynamic model is used here, MC-Glauber [55]. The calculations are in good agreement with the experimental data up to  $p_T = 2$  GeV/c.

Two initial conditions for the hydrodynamic model, MC-Glauber [55] and KLN-CGC [56], are compared in Fig. 24 and the corresponding impact on the final-state heavy-flavor spectra is displayed. The  $v_2$  predictions in the model show nonzero flow for electrons from heavy-flavor hadrons (Fig. 24), which are mainly D mesons for  $p_T < 5$  GeV/c. This model is consistent with the  $v_2$  data at low  $p_T$ , within experimental uncertainties.

## V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This article presents the measurements of the invariant yield and elliptic flow of electrons from heavy-flavor meson semileptonic decays in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV in PHENIX. The integrated invariant yield per binary collision is slightly larger than the yields from prior  $p + p$  measurements. This enhancement differs from the

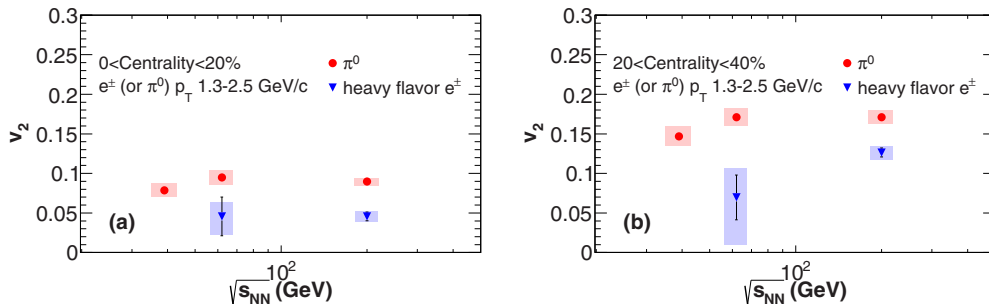


FIG. 23. (Color online) The  $v_2$  of heavy-flavor electrons and  $\pi^0$  in Au + Au collisions as a function of collision energy in the indicated  $p_T$  range of  $1.3 < p_T < 2.5$  GeV/c for (a) 0%–20% and (b) 20%–40% centrality.

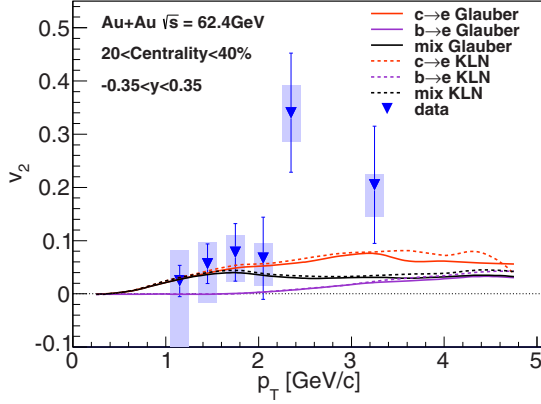


FIG. 24. (Color online) Heavy-flavor electron  $v_2$  in Au + Au collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 62.4$  GeV compared with multiple theory curves [47,49].

suppression observed in previous PHENIX measurements of heavy-flavor electrons in Au + Au at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV but is comparable to the enhancement observed in  $d + Au$  collisions at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV. Hence it is possible that the initial state Cronin enhancement becomes the dominant effect at low to moderate  $p_T$  for heavy quarks at this lower beam energy compared to energy loss in the medium. The measured  $v_2$  of heavy-flavor electrons is positive when averaged across  $p_T$  between 1.3 and 2.5 GeV/c. The heavy-flavor  $v_2$  is smaller than the  $\pi^0$   $v_2$  and may be caused by collective motion of charm quarks themselves and/or charmed hadrons accruing collective motion through recombination with flowing light partons. Further understanding of the properties of the medium and energy loss of the heavy quarks at 62.4 GeV requires the measurement of cold nuclear matter effects on heavy flavor through  $p + p$  or  $d + A$  collisions at 62.4 GeV, as well as a separation of the individual contributions from charm and bottom hadrons.

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