Re: LZ13895

   Probing neutrino hierarchy and chirality via wakes

   by Hong-Ming Zhu, Ue-Li Pen, Xuelei Chen, et al.

Dear Mr. Zhu,

The above manuscript has been reviewed by our referees.  While we

cannot make a definite commitment, we will probably accept your paper

for publication, provided you make changes that we judge to be in

accordance with the appended comments (or other satisfactory responses

are given).

With your resubmittal, please include a summary of changes made

and a brief response to all recommendations and criticisms.

Yours sincerely,

Stanley G. Brown

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Second Report of Referee A -- LZ13895/Zhu

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The authors have corrected the calculations as required, showing small

changes in the final results. They say also to have checked their back

of the envelope estimates against fully numerical integration,

obtaining a signal only 15% smaller than what stated in the paper.

There are still some missing points in the text, as the value of the

galaxy-bias adopted for the different surveys, the fact that all the

galaxies are located at a fixed redshift (which is not a good

approximation for very large surveys as LSST and Euclid), etc...

Since, at least for left-handed neutrinos, the authors find a signal

orders of magnitude larger than future 21cm sensitivities, I do not

think more precise calculations would alter the main conclusions of

the manuscript. However, the authors should add a few words about the

galaxy bias adopted in the paper, and provide some explanation for

their choice to locate all the galaxies at a fixed redshift, instead

of using the correct galaxy distribution of Euclid and LSST.

Reply: As we only need the direction of the relative velocity to calculate the dipole, the value of the bias is irrelevant. We add one comment below Eq.3 to explain this.

\*I think we also need to explain why we choose only one redshift instead of the complete distribution.

Given the provided checks, and the quite original idea, I suggest

publication in PRL, once the authors have made the small additions

mentioned above.

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Report of Referee B -- LZ13895/Zhu

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The paper proposes a new way of measuring the neutrino mass, using a

distortion of the weak lensing shear field by neutrino wakes around

halos. However, the effect is extremely small, and would always be

smaller than the effect of the neutrino mass on the power spectrum.

The euclid+LSST constraints (already futuristic) only constrain the

mass to a level already ruled out by current galaxy clustering

surveys. Given this, the paper in my view clearly fails the notability

requirement for PRL and thus should not be accepted as a Letter.

Reply: The effect of the neutrino mass on the power spectrum is degenerate with the galaxy bias, which is poorly known due to complicated baryon physics. So we try to propose some different ways to constrain neutrino masses, which suffer less from the unknown baryon effects.

I also share the concerns of the previous referee that the

calculations, essentially order of magnitude estimates, presented here

are still overly simplistic and overly generous, and reject it also

for that reason.

Overall I feel that when the below points are addressed, it will be

clear that the effect is far too small to ever observe, in which case

to be accepted the paper should be resubmitted to PRD making this

conclusion clear in the abstract. I may be wrong about this, but I

would ask the authors to perform the calculation with some care.

Effects this small are easily swamped.

Specifically:

1. N-body simulations run by Inman et al. 2015 found that the

nonlinear effect is substantially smaller than the linear theory

effect assumed here. Part of this is due to the assumption of a static

halo mass to estimate the effect of neutrino wakes. You should use the

more correct non-linear effect, especially since you are the same

authors on both papers.

Reply: The nonlinear effect from simulations is similar to the linear result here?

\*I’m not quite sure about this. Maybe Derek will give a more clear explanation?

2. It is not clear to me that your assertion that nothing else creates

the dipole moment due to neutrino wakes is true. For example, it seems

to me AGN jets could easily induce a local dipole. As the neutrino

wake effect is very small, even a small effect of AGN can swamp the

neutrino wake signal.

Reply: The dipole from AGN will not aligned with the direction of the relative velocity. So the dipole from AGN will increase the noise of the signal, but not produce a fake signal.

3. In the simple mode-counting arguments employed to estimate

observability, particularly for the 21 cm experiment, the error on

kappa is dominated by the large number of small-scale modes. However,

the neutrino wake effect occurs only on large scales, and goes to zero

for k > 1, so only these modes should be counted when estimating

errors. This would greatly diminish the power of the 21 cm experiment

at least.

Reply: We use 21cm observations as sources instead of lenses. The relative motion at low redshift produces dipoles around halos, which we try to measure with distortions of high redshift sources by these dipole mass distributions.

4. The 21 cm experiment as described in the given reference is

futuristic to the point of total infeasibility. It is also only

vaguely sketched, and I do not feel you have done enough work to

demonstrate its potential to measure neutrino wakes. For example, the

calculation done in the paper is for large halos at z=0.3. If you wish

to include 21 cm constraints, you should perform a calculation of the

neutrino wake effect for the smaller and higher redshift halos which

are measured by a dark ages 21 cm experiment.

Reply: With higher redshift sources, more lenses at low redshift will contribute to the signal. While contributions from high redshift is smaller and down weighted by the lensing kernel, the total signal will still a little stronger than the current estimate. This will not change the main conclusion of this paper.

5. Finally, as a small point, rather than using non-standard terms

such as ‘quasi-degenerate’ in the abstract, it would be better to

frame the paper as quantitative potential constraints on physical

variables, like the neutrino mass, or the mass splitting.

Reply:

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Report of Referee C -- LZ13895/Zhu

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This paper discusses an interesting, original idea on a potential

probe to the neutrino sector of the dark matter, by comparing the mass

density field that is inferred from the large-scale distribution of

galaxies and from weak gravitational lensing, and focusing on the

phenomenon of the wake produced by dark matter halos on the

distribution of neutrinos.

In my opinion the paper should be accepted for publication in Physical

Review Letters. This new idea can clearly give rise to new

developments in the field of large-scale structure. Even though the

idea has not been exhaustively checked with numerical simulations, and

the effect is very small and difficult to detect with currently

planned surveys, I think this is not a reason to prefer publication in

Phys. Rev. D. The letters should precisely highlight new ideas that

may potentially introduce new elements of discussion in their research

field. The authors have reasonably answered the comments of the

previous referees.

I would also like to give the following comment to the authors: it is

assumed in the paper that the non-linear effect that depends on the

presence of neutrinos with a certain velocity dispersion as a dark

matter component is described as wakes that can be modeled as if they

were created by halos of fixed mass $M$. This is not clear to me,

actually the wakes are produced by the entire large-scale structure,

not just halos, and the halos in any case do not have fixed mass but

they are continuously growing. In the end, the thing that is important

is that one uses the galaxy distribution to predict a large-scale

velocity field, and from this, to predict a difference between the

density field of cold dark matter and that of neutrinos, as a function

of the neutrino velocity dispersion. Weak lensing is then used to test

if the neutrino component is there, and to measure its contribution to

the density. The question is to what extent one can measure the small

difference due to neutrinos. It is not clear if this difference is

adequately modeled by considering the abundance of halos of mass $M$;

perhaps the real overall effect might be larger than this simple halo

model predicts. This can only be studied in a much more complete work,

but I think the authors may consider saying something about this.

Reply: The relative motion between CDM and neutrinos will also produce an observable effect in the entire large-scale structure, which is the cross correlation dipole between CDM and neutrinos. This has been studied in our previous paper. We add one comment in the second paragraph following the citation of our previous paper. A detailed study about the accumulation of neutrinos around a growing halo with a bulk velocity can be accomplished similarly as in M. LoVerde & M. Zaldarriaga, PRD 89, 063502, which gives an complete description of the clustering of neutrinos in the cosmological background. We add something about this in the last paragraph in section ”Neutrino wakes and lensing signal”.