

Hydrodynamic simulations of relativistic heavy-ion collisions with different calculations of the QCD equation of state

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I. INTRODUCTION

Fluid dynamics is a useful framework to study the collective behaviour of hot and dense nuclear matter produced in relativistic heavy-ions. Quantum Chromodynamics (QCD) predicts that at sufficiently high energies these collisions form a new state of matter consisting of deconfined quarks and gluons known as a quark-gluon plasma (QGP). Simulations based on relativistic viscous hydrodynamics play a central role in extracting properties of the QGP which expands and freezes into hadrons too quickly for direct observation.

The hydrodynamic transport equations require two essential ingredients to specify the full time evolution of the QGP fireball: initial conditions which describe the thermal profile of the QGP droplet at some early starting time and a QCD equation of state which interrelates energy density, pressure and temperature of each fluid cell in local thermal equilibrium.

Lattice discretization is the only reliable method to calculate the QCD equation of state in the vicinity of the QGP phase transition and hence constitutes a critical component of hydrodynamic simulations. While lattice techniques are rigorous in their treatment of the underlying QCD Lagrangian, they are subject to numerical errors inherent in the lattice discretization procedure. These errors are manifest in differences in the continuum extrapolated QCD trace anomaly predicted by different lattice collaborations and lead to an overall uncertainty in the true value of the QCD equation of state at zero baryochemical potential.

Simulations using a lattice based equation of state hence inherit all forms of numeric and systematic uncertainty associated with the underlying lattice methodology. These modeling uncertainties have been studied both at low temperature, by comparing simulations with a lattice equation of state to results obtained from a hadron resonance gas model [1], and at high temperature by comparing the effect of different lattice parameterizations of the lattice equation of state on particle spectra and flow [1, 2].

Recent calculations by the HotQCD and Wuppertal-Budapest collaborations of the QCD trace anomaly in the continuum limit now show good agreement within errors. This signals an important convergence in lattice descriptions of the QCD equation of state which previously exhibited a tension in the peak of the trace anomaly near the QGP phase transition. It is not yet clear how-

ever, if current lattice errors are under sufficient control for hydrodynamic transport models or if further improvement is needed.

In this work, we analyze the current status of lattice gauge calculations in the continuum limit by comparing simulation predictions using different lattice calculations of the QGP equation of state. We study the latest HotQCD and Wuppertal-Budapest parameterizations as well as the depreciated s95 parametrization based on older HotQCD lattice results.

Each equation of state is analyzed using a hybrid simulation which couples viscous hydrodynamics to a microscopic, kinetic description for the evolution of the QGP and subsequent hadron resonance gas. The flows, spectra and Bertsch-Pratt radii are calculated from the simulation using each equation of state in order to quantify differences between the calculations. In addition, we analyze uncertainty in the HotQCD analysis by repeating the aforementioned procedure using different parameterizations of the QCD trace anomaly sampled from the bootstrap coefficients characterizing the error in the HotQCD continuum extrapolation. Using these results, we comment on the effect of equation of state uncertainties on hydrodynamic simulations and assess the need for further refinements to the lattice data at zero baryo-chemical potential.

II. EQUATIONS OF STATE

The hybrid model approach used in this study switches from a fluid dynamic description of the medium for the liquid-like, QGP phase of the collision to a microscopic Boltzmann description once the system cools and freezes into a hadron resonance gas. While the equation of state enters the hydrodynamic phase of the simulation as a freely specified function interrelating energy density, pressure and temperature, its description in the kinetic phase of the collision is fixed by the finite number of resonances included in the microscopic UrQMD transport model.

As a result, we limit our study to differences in the QCD equation of state *above* the QGP transition temperature where hydrodynamics allows us to freely vary its chosen form. We study three different parameterizations for this high temperature dependence – two state of the art calculations in 2+1 flavour QCD from the HotQCD [3] and Wuppertal-Budapest [4] collaborations, as well as the older s95p-v1 parameterization [1] constructed using

lattice data measured with a coarser lattice spacing [5].

The QCD equation of state is frequently characterized by the trace of the energy-momentum tensor, also referred to as the trace anomaly or interaction measure. When scaled by powers of the temperature, the trace anomaly forms a dimensionless measure

$$I \equiv \frac{\Theta^{\mu\mu}(T)}{T^4} = \frac{e - 3p}{T^4}, \quad (1)$$

where e is the local fluid energy density, p the pressure and T the temperature.

In Fig. 1 we plot the temperature scaled interaction measure of each equation of state as well as that of a hadron resonance gas calculated from the list of partial resonances included in the UrQMD microscopic transport model. The s95p-v1 parameterization, which was constructed to interpolate between a hadron resonance gas calculation at low temperatures and lattice results at high temperatures, is in good agreement with the UrQMD equation of state while the HotQCD and Wuppertal-Budapest results are slightly higher in the vicinity of the phase transition.

To ensure a self consistent description in regions of the collision where the simulation switches from hydrodynamics to Boltzmann transport, we match each high temperature lattice equation of state with the low temperature UrQMD equation of state. We thus define a piecewise function for the temperature scaled interaction measure,

$$I(T) = \begin{cases} I_{\text{hrg}}(T) & T \leq T_1 \\ I_{\text{blend}}(T) & T_1 < T < T_2 \\ I_{\text{lattice}}(T) & T \geq T_2, \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

where I_{hrg} is the hadron resonance gas trace anomaly in UrQMD pictured in Fig. 1, I_{lattice} represents one of the HotQCD, Wuppertal-Budapest or S95p-v1 parameterizations and I_{blend} is a function which smoothly connects between the two in the temperature interval $T_1 < T < T_2$,

$$I_{\text{blend}} = (1 - z) I_{\text{hrg}} + z I_{\text{lattice}}. \quad (3)$$

The interpolation parameter $z \in [0, 1]$ in equation 3 is constructed to match the first and second derivatives at the endpoints of the interpolation interval,

$$z = 6x^5 - 15x^4 + 10x^3 \quad (4)$$

$$\text{where } x = (T - T_1)/(T_2 - T_1). \quad (5)$$

We fix the piecewise temperature bounds $T_1 = 154$ MeV and $T_2 = 180$ MeV for the hydro-to-micro switching temperature $T_{\text{sw}} = 154$ MeV used in this work. While lower switching temperatures permit a smoother transition between the lattice and UrQMD equations of state, they necessitate chemical non-equilibrium corrections which occur naturally in UrQMD but are not accounted for in the present lattice parameterizations [?].

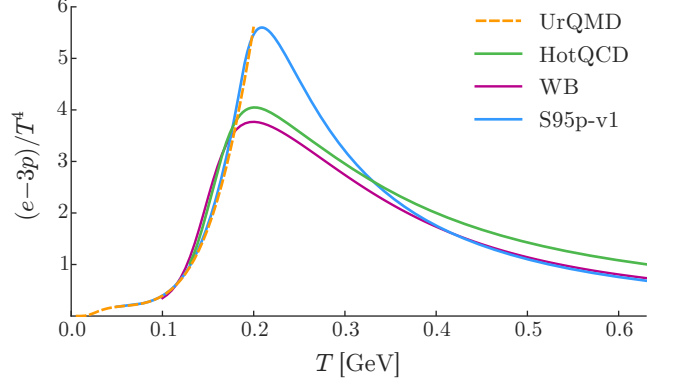


FIG. 1. The temperature scaled QCD trace anomaly for the UrQMD, HotQCD, WB and s95p-v1 parameterizations as a function of temperature [?].

The modified interaction measures, labeled with a prime to distinguish them from their published values, are plotted in Fig. 2. The vertical gray line marks the hydro-to-micro switching temperature $T_{\text{sw}} = 154$ MeV where the model switches from the VISH2+1 hydrodynamics code to UrQMD.

In Fig. 3 we plot the squared speed of sound $c_s^2 = dp/de$ for each modified interaction measure. The speed of sound of the HotQCD' and WB' equations of state are in good agreement while the S95' parameterization remains softer in a wider interval about the QGP phase transition. We note that the speed of sound in the HotQCD' and WB' parameterizations is clearly affected by the interpolation in the vicinity of the switching temperature (gray vertical line), but that the imposed matching maintains continuity.

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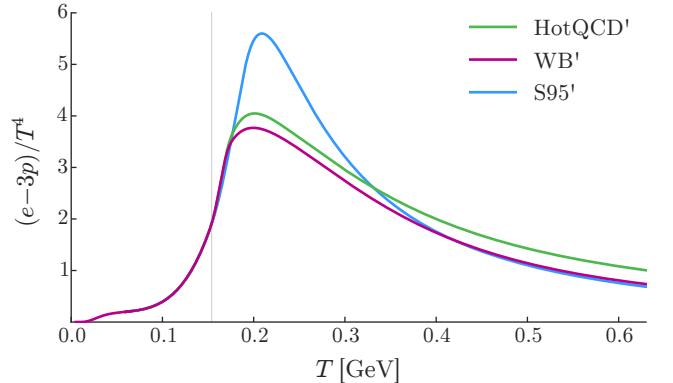


FIG. 2. The modified QCD trace anomalies HotQCD', WB' and S95' obtained from equation (2) and the corresponding lattice parameterizations in Fig. 1. The gray, vertical line marks the hydro-to-micro switching temperature $T_{\text{sw}} = 154$ MeV.

III. HYBRID MODEL

The equations of state are compared using the VISHNU transport model which couples boost invariant viscous fluid dynamics [?] for the hot and dense early phase of the collision with a microscopic, kinetic description of late hadronic rescattering and freeze-out [?]. The mock particle data generated by each simulated event are then stored and analyzed using the same methods applied in the experiment.

A. Initial Conditions

We generate hydrodynamic initial conditions using a standard two-component Monte Carlo Glauber model which deposits entropy proportional to a linear combination of nucleon participants and binary nucleon-nucleon collisions,

$$dS/dy|_{y=0} \propto \frac{(1-\alpha)}{2} N_{\text{part}} + \alpha N_{\text{coll}}. \quad (6)$$

The entropy is localized about each nucleon's transverse parton density $T_p(\mathbf{x})$,

$$dS/dy|_{y=0} \propto \sum_{i=0}^{N_{\text{part},A}} w_i T_p(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_i)(1 - \alpha + \alpha N_{\text{coll},i}) + \sum_{j=0}^{N_{\text{part},B}} w_j T_p(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_j)(1 - \alpha + \alpha N_{\text{coll},j}) \quad (7)$$

where the summations run over the participants in each nucleus, $N_{\text{coll},i}$ denotes the number of binary collisions suffered by the i^{th} nucleon and the proton density $T_p(\mathbf{x})$ is described by a Gaussian

$$T_p(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi B}} \exp\left(-\frac{x^2 + y^2}{2B}\right) \quad (8)$$

with transverse area $B = 0.36 \text{ fm}^2$.

The random nucleon weights w_i in equation (7) are sampled independently from a Gamma distribution with unit mean

$$P_k(w) = \frac{k^k}{\Gamma(k)} w^{k-1} e^{-kw}, \quad (9)$$

and shape parameter $k = \text{Var}(P)^{-1}$ which modulates the variance of the distribution. These fluctuations are typically added [?] to reproduce the large multiplicity fluctuations observed in minimum bias proton-proton collisions. In this work the shape parameter is fixed to $k = 1$ to fit the 200 GeV UA5 data [?].

For the binary collision fraction in equation (6), we choose the value $\alpha = 0.14$ used in reference [?].

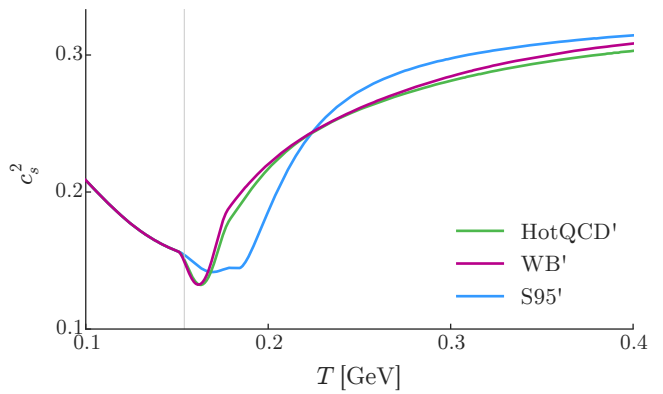


FIG. 3. Speed of sound squared c_s^2 plotted versus temperature T for the three equations of state used in this study. The vertical gray line indicates the switching temperature $T_{\text{sw}} = 154 \text{ MeV}$ where the model switches from fluid dynamics to a microscopic transport model.

B. Hydrodynamics and Boltzmann Transport

The initial condition profiles, which provide the entropy density $dS/(d^2r_\perp d\eta \tau_{\text{therm}})$ at the QGP thermalization time, are rescaled by an overall normalization factor which is tuned to fit the centrality dependence of charged particle production in 200 GeV gold-gold collisions.

We follow the work in reference [?] and fix the hydrodynamic specific shear viscosity to a constant value $(\eta/s)_{\text{QGP}} = 0.08$ which has been shown to provide a reasonable description of measured spectra and flows in 200 GeV gold-gold collisions. For the purposes of this study, we assume vanishing bulk viscosity $\zeta/s = 0$, although it would be interesting to account for finite bulk viscosity in future work, as its functional form is sensitive to the value of the QGP trace anomaly near the QCD phase transition [?].

In order to switch from hydrodynamic field equations to microscopic transport, the VISHNU model asserts a sudden switching temperature T_{sw} at which the hydrodynamic energy-momentum tensor is particlized using the Cooper-Frye freezeout prescription,

$$E \frac{dN_i}{d^3p} = \int_\sigma f_i(x, p) p^\mu d^3\sigma_\mu \quad (10)$$

where f_i is the distribution function of particle species i , p^μ is its four-momentum and $d^3\sigma_\mu$ characterizes an element of the isothermal freezeout hypersurface defined by T_{sw} .

For a simplistic physical system with a first order phase transition, one would typically fix the hydro to kinetic switching temperature to a value just below the phase transition temperature. This allows the hydrodynamic phase of the model to account for complex dynamics of the phase transition which are difficult to model microscopically. Unfortunately, the prescription for fixing the

TABLE I. Switching energy density and temperature for transition from fluid dynamics to Boltzmann transport.

	S95	HotQCD	WB
e_{sw} [GeV/fm ³]	0.335	0.335	0.335
T_{sw} [GeV]	0.157	0.154	0.154

switching temperature is not so clear in the case of relativistic heavy-ion collisions where the phase transition is a smooth cross over and cannot be identified with a single transition temperature.

In this work we switch from fluid dynamics to microscopic kinetics using a hypersurface of constant temperature corresponding to a fixed energy density of $e_{\text{sw}} = 335$

MeV. This leads to a slightly different transition temperatures for each equation of state as shown in table I.

IV. POSTPROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

V. RESULTS

VI. CONCLUSION

VII. SUMMARY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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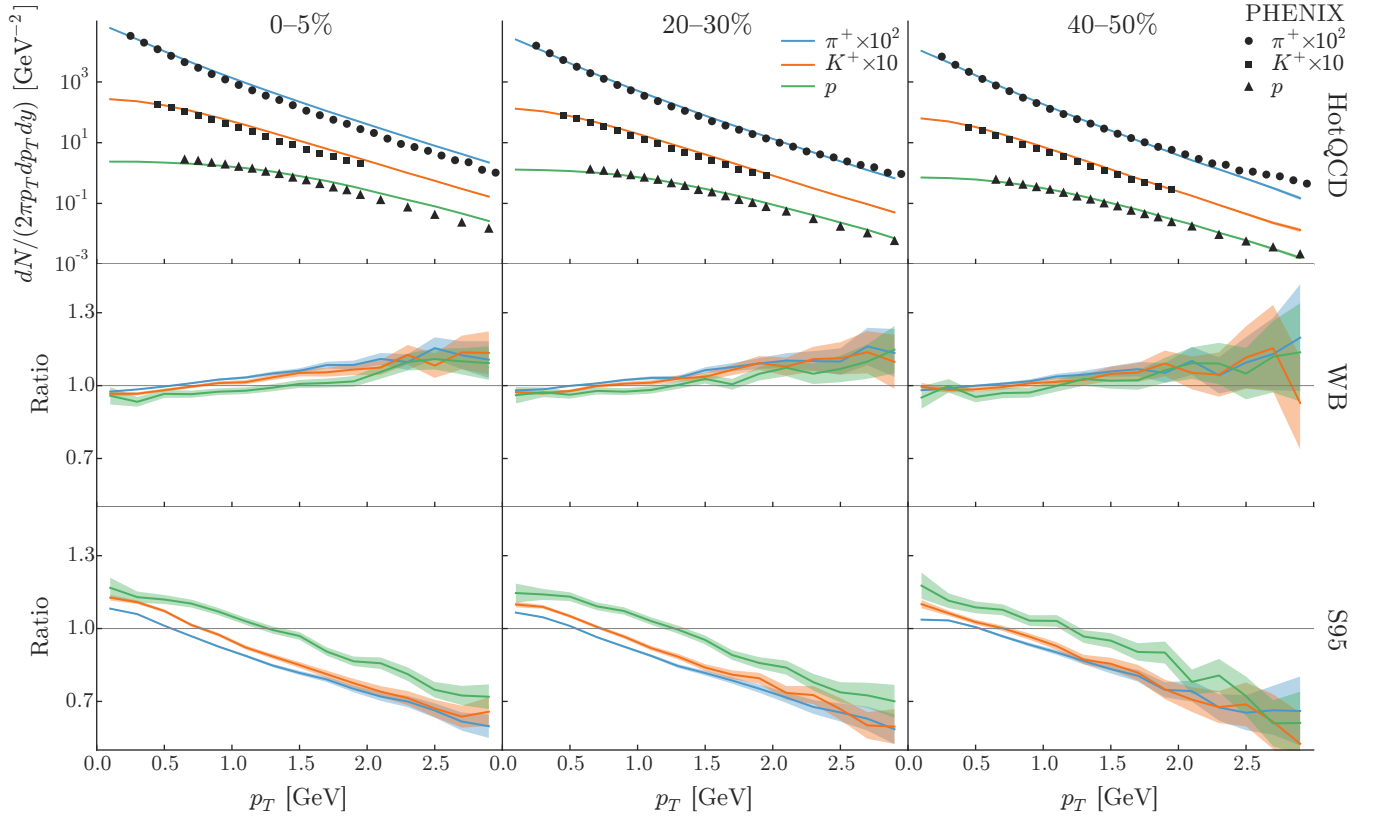


FIG. 4.

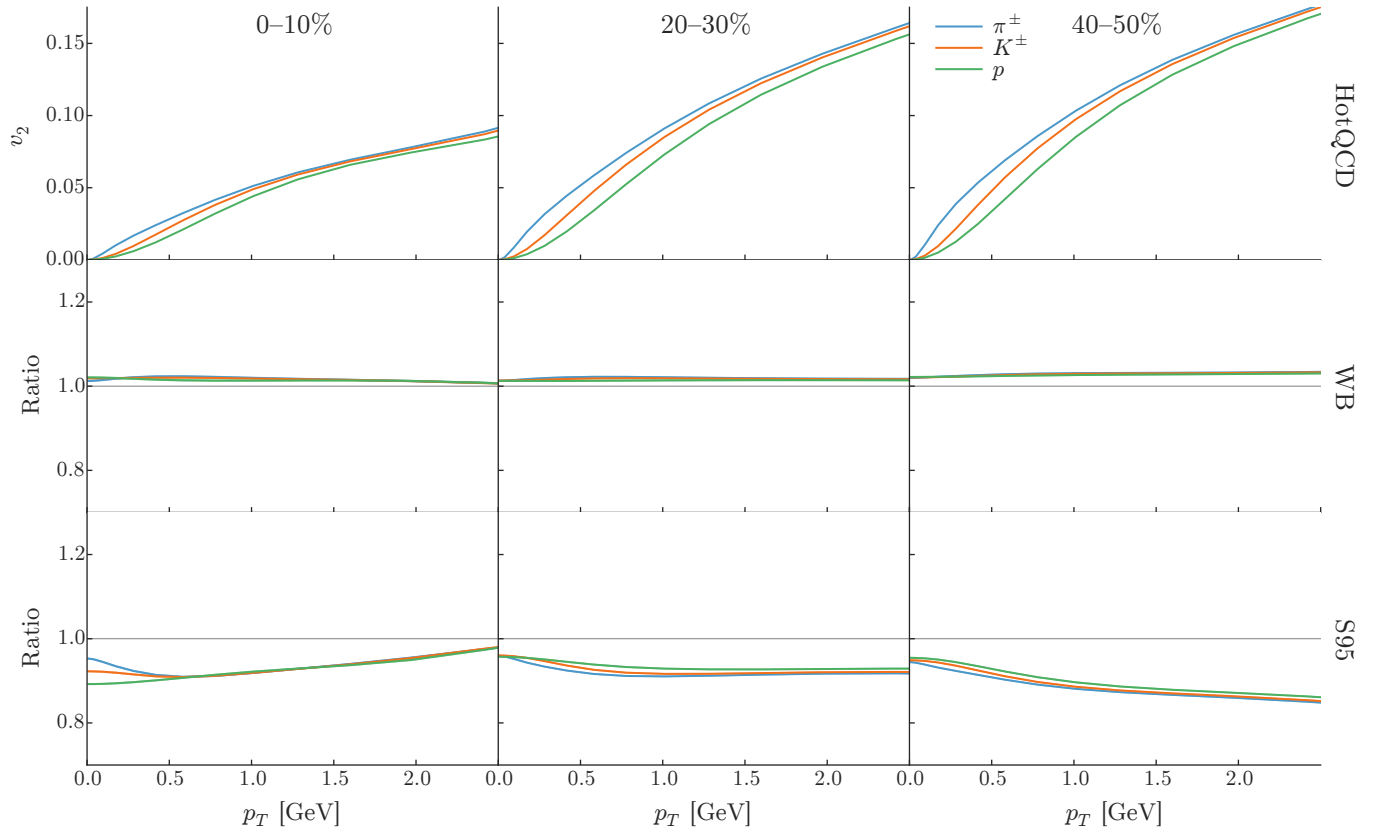


FIG. 5.

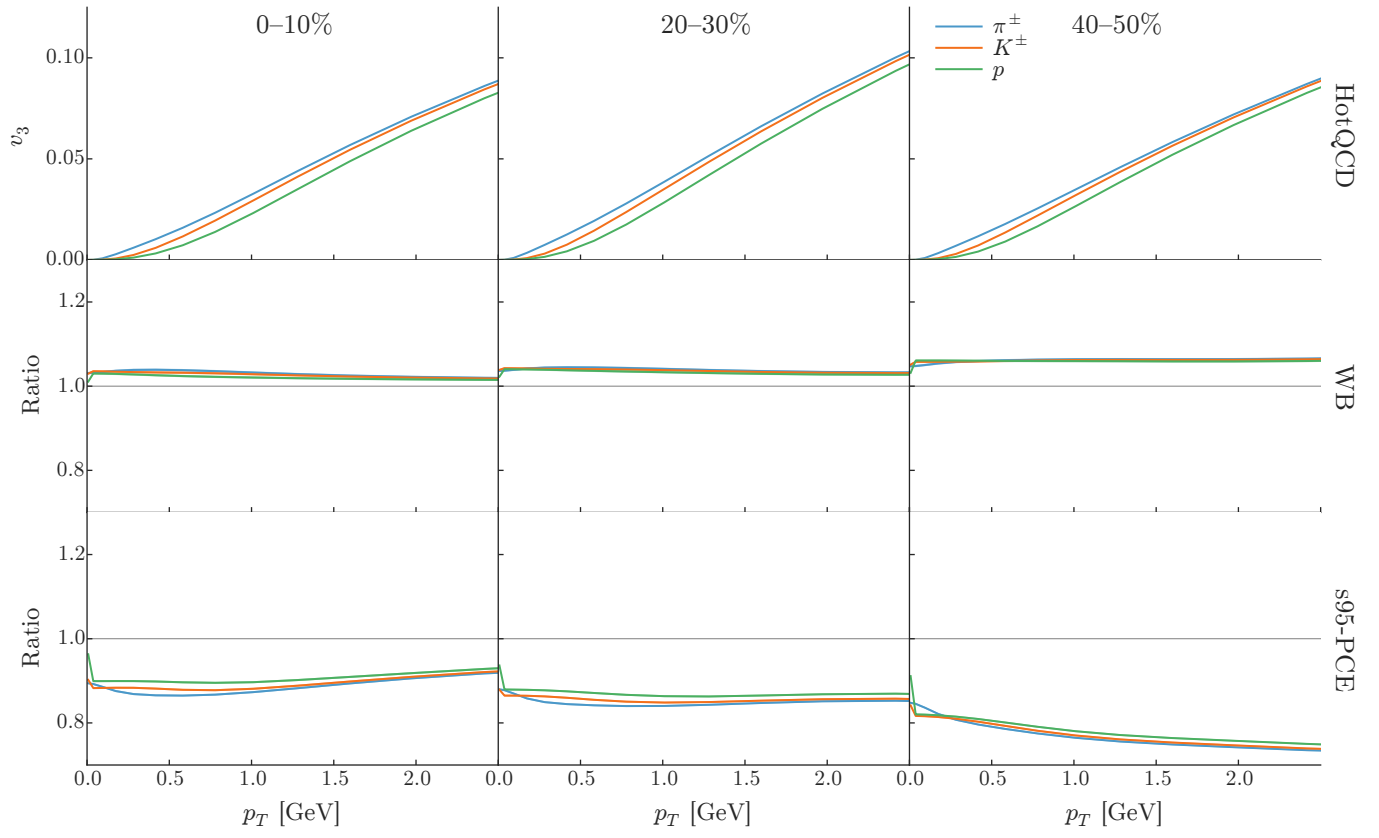


FIG. 6.

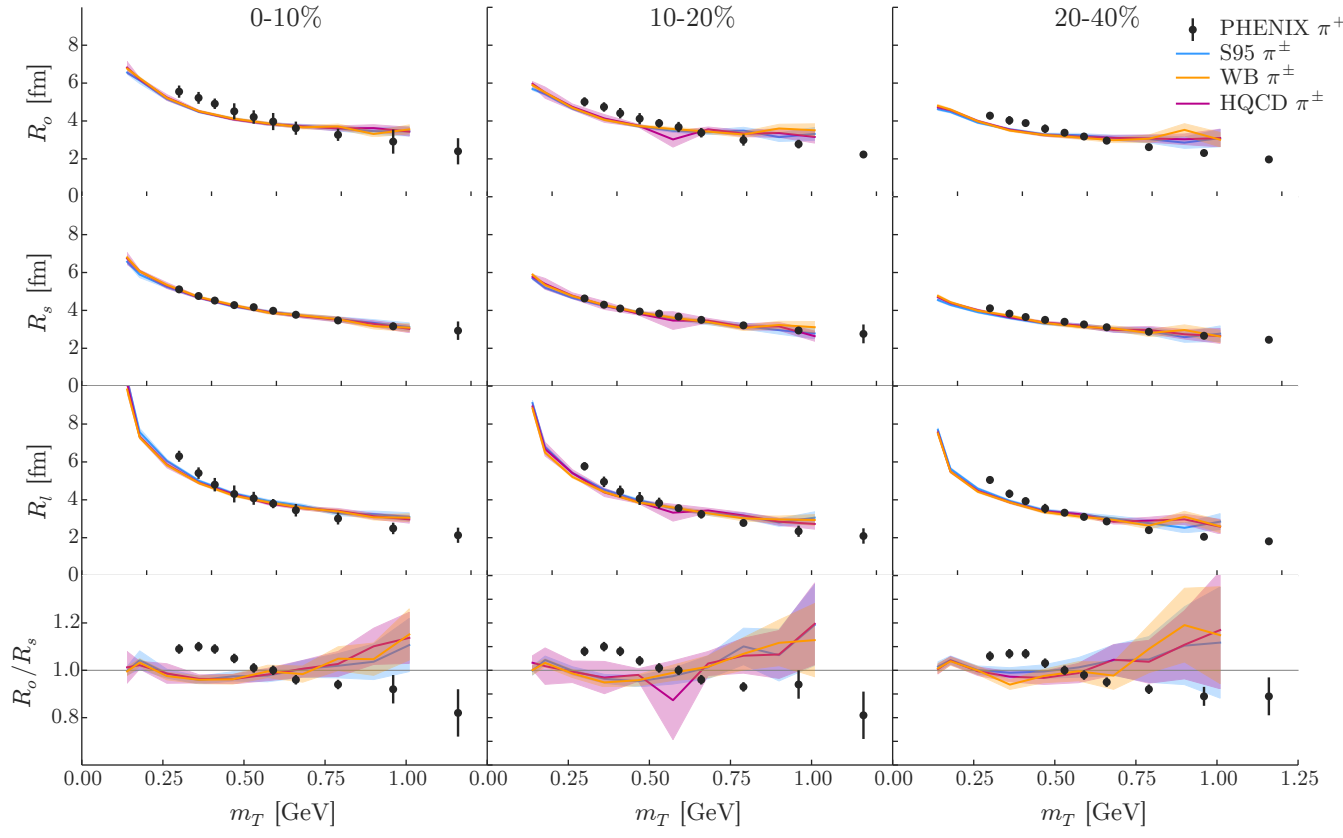


FIG. 7.