The Scientific Temper (2024) Vol. 15 (2): 2099-2103
E-ISSN: 2231-6396, ISSN: 0976-8653
Doi: 10.58414/SCIENTIFICTEMPER.2024.15.2.20
https://scientifictemper.com/
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Exploring cosmic ray energy loss mechanisms: Insights from Bethe-Bloch, modified bethe-bloch, and inverse compton scattering equations

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Abstract

This study delves into the intricate dynamics of cosmic ray energy loss mechanisms, employing three distinct mathematical approaches: the Bethe-Bloch equation, the modified Bethe-Bloch equation, and the inverse compton scattering equation. The Bethe-Bloch equation elucidates the ionization and bremsstrahlung processes governing cosmic ray interactions with plasma mediums, providing foundational insights into energy loss phenomena. Expanding upon this, the modified Bethe-Bloch equation integrates additional factors such as medium density and magnetic fields, refining our understanding of cosmic ray propagation in diverse astrophysical environments. Moreover, the inverse Compton scattering equation uncovers the energy loss mechanisms associated with cosmic ray interactions with photons in the interstellar medium, contributing essential insights into high-energy astrophysical phenomena. Through mathematical derivations, numerical computations, and graphical analyses, our investigation reveals the intricate dependencies of final cosmic ray energy on various parameters, including initial energy, target photon density, and magnetic field strength. Furthermore, our findings have broader implications for astrophysical processes such as gamma-ray emission and cosmic-ray acceleration mechanisms. By elucidating the complex interplay between cosmic rays and their surrounding environments, this study advances our understanding of high-energy astrophysical phenomena and provides a framework for future research in this field.

Keywords: Cosmic rays, Energy loss mechanism, Bethe-Bloch equation, Inverse scattering equation, Astrophysical phenomena, Interstellar medium.

Introduction

Cosmic rays, consisting primarily of high-energy charged particles, are ubiquitous throughout the universe and play a crucial role in shaping various astrophysical phenomena. Understanding the propagation and behavior of cosmic rays is essential for unraveling the mysteries of the cosmos. Over the years, numerous studies have been conducted to elucidate the mechanisms governing cosmic ray energy loss as they traverse through interstellar space (G. J. Mathews, 2002). This introduction provides an overview of three prominent methods employed in investigating cosmic ray energy loss: The Bethe-Bloch equation, the modified Bethe-Bloch equation, and the Inverse compton Scattering equation.

The Bethe-Bloch equation (A. W. Strong, I. V. Moskalenko, and O. Reimer, 2000) serves as a cornerstone in the study of cosmic ray interactions with matter. Developed by Hans Bethe and Felix Bloch in the 1930s, this equation describes the energy loss of charged particles, such as cosmic ray protons and electrons, as they pass through a medium. The equation accounts for ionization and bremsstrahlung processes (T. K. Gaisser, 2002), providing valuable insights into the rate of energy loss and the resulting attenuation of cosmic ray fluxes (M. Aguilar *et al*., 2015 & R. Atkins *et al*., 2000)

Building upon the Bethe-Bloch equation, the modified Bethe-Bloch equation (S. P. Swordy, 1998) incorporates additional factors to enhance its applicability in diverse astrophysical environments. This modified equation takes into account variations in medium density and magnetic fields, which can significantly influence cosmic

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How to cite this article: Raghavendra, R., Reddy, S. K. A. (2024). Exploring cosmic ray energy loss mechanisms: Insights from bethe-bloch, modified Bethe-Bloch, and inverse compton scattering equations. The Scientific Temper, **15**(2):2099-2103.

Doi: 10.58414/SCIENTIFICTEMPER.2024.15.2.20

Source of support: Nil

Conflict of interest: None.

Received: 07/04/2024 **Accepted:** 11/05/2024 **Published** : 15/06/2024

ray propagation. By considering these additional factors, researchers gain a more comprehensive understanding of the energy loss mechanisms encountered by cosmic rays as they traverse through different regions of space.

In addition to interactions with matter, cosmic rays also undergo energy loss through interactions with photons in the interstellar medium. The inverse Compton scattering equation (G. J. Mathews, 2002) describes this process, wherein cosmic ray electrons scatter off photons, transferring energy to the photons in the process. This mechanism, first proposed by Arthur Compton in 1923, contributes to the overall energy loss experienced by cosmic ray electrons, particularly in regions with high photon densities.

A thorough understanding of cosmic ray energy loss mechanisms is essential for interpreting observational data and modeling cosmic ray propagation in astrophysical environments. Studies such as those conducted by scientists (Aguilar *et al*., 2015 and; Swordy, 1998) have provided valuable insights into cosmic ray fluxes and their interactions with the interstellar medium. Furthermore, observations from instruments such as the alpha magnetic spectrometer (G. Domínguez *et al*., 2011) and the Fermi-large area telescope (A. A. Abdo *et al*., 2002) have contributed to our understanding of cosmic ray spectra and their implications for astrophysics.

By integrating insights from the Bethe-Bloch equation, the modified Bethe-Bloch equation, and the inverse Compton scattering equation, researchers can develop comprehensive models of cosmic ray propagation and energy loss. These models, validated through comparisons with observational data (M. Aguilar *et al*., 2000; R. C. Hartman *et al*., 1999; G. Domínguez *et al*., 2011 and A. A. Abdo *et al*.,2002), enable scientists to probe the underlying physics of cosmic ray acceleration and propagation, shedding light on fundamental astrophysical processes. As we continue to refine our understanding of cosmic ray energy loss mechanisms, we move closer to unraveling the mysteries of the universe and gaining deeper insights into its workings.

Differential Energy Loss Equation

Cosmic rays interact with atmospheric particles through ionization and scattering processes. Energy loss is predominantly due to ionization processes. Let *dE* be the energy lost by a cosmic ray particle as it traverses a differential path length $dxdx$ through the atmosphere. *n* is the number density of atmospheric particles per unit volume. $\frac{dE}{dx}$ represents the rate of energy loss per unit path length.

The energy loss *dE* suffered by a cosmic ray particle due to ionization as it traverses a small distance *dx* can be expressed as

$$dE = -\frac{dE}{dx}dx \tag{1}$$

Where $\frac{dE}{dx}$ is negative because the energy of the cosmic ray decreases as it loses energy.

Now, let's consider the number of collisions per unit length $dxdx$ suffered by the cosmic ray particle. This can be expressed as:

$$dN = n\sigma dx \tag{2}$$

Where dN is the number of collisions suffered by the cosmic ray particle, n is the number density of atmospheric particles, σ is the cross-section for ionization.

The energy loss dE due to each collision is given by the average energy loss per collision, $\langle \Delta E \rangle$, multiplied by the number of collisions dN

$$dE = \langle \Delta E \rangle dN \tag{3}$$

Now, using the relation (2), we can rewrite dE as

$$dE = \langle \Delta E \rangle n\sigma dx \tag{4}$$

Equating the expressions for dE, we get

$$-\frac{dE}{dx}dx = \langle \Delta E \rangle n\sigma dx \tag{5}$$

$$-\frac{dE}{dx} = \langle \Delta E \rangle n\sigma$$

Dividing both sides by dx and rearranging terms, we obtain the differential energy loss equation.

$$\frac{dE}{dx} = -\langle \Delta E \rangle n\sigma \tag{6}$$

This equation represents the rate of energy loss per unit path length of cosmic ray particles in the atmosphere due to ionization processes. The negative sign indicates that the energy of the cosmic ray decreases as it traverses the atmosphere. This equation forms the basis for further analysis of cosmic ray propagation and can be used to study the energy spectrum of cosmic rays at different altitudes in the atmosphere.

To solve the differential energy loss equation with initial and boundary conditions, we first need to specify the conditions at the starting point of the cosmic ray's journey through the atmosphere (initial condition) and at its destination or a specific point of interest (boundary condition).

Let's denote the initial energy of the cosmic ray particle as E_0 and its energy at a distance x from the starting point as $E(x)$. We will also specify the boundary condition as the energy of the cosmic ray particle at a particular altitude $x = L$, where L is the total path length traversed through the atmosphere.

At the beginning of the journey through the atmosphere, the cosmic ray particle has an initial energy E_0. Therefore, the initial condition can be expressed as

$$E(0) = E_0 \tag{7}$$

This equation represents the energy of the cosmic ray particle at the starting point.

At a certain altitude $x = L$, we want to determine the final energy of the cosmic ray particle. Let's denote this final energy as E_f. Therefore, the boundary condition can be expressed as:

$$E(L) = E_f \tag{8}$$

This equation represents the energy of the cosmic ray particle at the specified altitude L, which serves as the boundary condition for our differential equation.

Let's integrate this equation from the initial point $x = 0$ to the final point $x = L$, with the above-mentioned initial condition and boundary conditions

$$\int_{E_0}^{E_f} \frac{dE}{E} = -\langle \Delta E \rangle \int_0^L n\, dx \quad (9)$$

$$E_f = E_0 . e^{-\langle \Delta E \rangle n \sigma L} \quad (10)$$

This equation represents the final energy of the cosmic ray particle after traversing a distance L through the atmosphere, given an initial energy E_0 and atmospheric conditions characterized by the number density of particles n and the ionization cross-section σ. This solution demonstrates how the energy of a cosmic ray particle changes as it propagates through the atmosphere, incorporating both initial and boundary conditions.

Bethe-Bloch Formula

Bethe-Bloch formula provides the rate of energy loss of charged particles (like cosmic rays) as they traverse a medium (like interstellar space).

The Bethe-Bloch formula describes the energy loss per unit path length ($\frac{dE}{dx}$) of a charged particle in a medium as

$$-\frac{dE}{dx} = K \frac{Z}{A} \frac{z^2}{\beta^2} [ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 T_{max}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2}] \quad (11)$$

Where, K is constant, Z is the atomic number of the medium, A is the atomic mass of the medium, z is the charge of the incident particle, $\beta = \frac{v}{c}$ is the velocity of the particle relative to the speed of light (c), $\gamma = \frac{1}{\sqrt{1-\beta^2}}$ is the Lorentz factor, m_e is the electron rest mass, c is the speed of light, T_{max} is the maximum kinetic energy transferred to a single electron in a single collision, I is the mean excitation energy, $\delta(\beta\gamma)$ is a density correction term.

let's incorporate additional considerations into the Bethe-Bloch equation to account for variations in interstellar medium density (n) and the effects of magnetic fields (B).

Modified Bethe-Bloch equation becomes

$$-\frac{dE}{dx} = K \frac{Z}{A} \frac{z^2}{\beta^2} \left[ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 T_{max}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2}\right] . n . \Phi(B) \quad (12)$$

$\Phi(B)$ represents the fields on the energy loss rate. Integrate the equation (12) we get

$$\Delta E = -K \frac{Z}{A} \frac{z^2}{\beta^2} \left[ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 T_{max}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2}\right] . n . \Phi(B). \quad (13)$$

By applying initial at x = 0, E = E_0 and final conditions at x = x_f, E = E_f we get

$$\Delta E = -K \frac{Z}{A} \frac{z^2}{\beta^2} \left[ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 T_{max}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2}\right] . n . \Phi(B) . 0 = E0 \Rightarrow$$

$$E0 = 0 \quad (14)$$

$$\Delta E = -K \frac{Z}{A} \frac{z^2}{\beta^2} \left[ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 T_{max}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2}\right] . n . \Phi(B) . x_f = E_f \quad (15)$$

Solving for x_f we get

$$x_f = \frac{E_f}{-K \frac{Z}{A} \frac{z^2}{\beta^2} \left[ln \frac{2m_e c^2 \beta^2 \gamma^2 T_{max}}{I^2} - \beta^2 - \frac{\delta(\beta\gamma)}{2}\right] . n . \Phi(B)} \quad (16)$$

Energy Loss Rate Equation (Inverse Compton Scattering Equation)

Another equation commonly used to describe the energy loss of cosmic rays is the «energy loss rate» equation, which accounts for various processes involved in the interaction of cosmic rays with the interstellar medium. One such equation is the «energy loss rate» equation due to inverse Compton scattering, which describes the energy loss of cosmic ray electrons due to scattering off photons in the interstellar medium. The equation for the energy loss rate ($-\frac{dE}{dx}$) due to inverse Compton scattering can be expressed as

$$-\frac{dE}{dx} = \frac{4}{3} \sigma_T c n_\gamma (\frac{E}{m_e c^2})^2 \quad (17)$$

where σ_T is the Thomson scattering cross-section ($\approx$ 6.625 $\times 10^{-25} cm^2$), c is the velocity of light ($\approx 3 \times 10^{10} cm/sec$), n_γ is the number density of target photons in the interstellar medium, E is the energy of cosmic ray electron, $m_e c^2$ is the rest energy of the electron ($\approx$ 0.511 MeV). This equation describes the rate at which cosmic ray electrons lose energy as they scatter off target photons in the interstellar medium *via* the inverse Compton scattering process.

Energy of the cosmic ray electron (E) = 10 MeV, number density of target photons in the interstellar medium (n_γ) = 10^6 cm^{-3}, Using these values, we'll solve the energy loss rate equation to find the final energy of the cosmic ray electron (E_f). Applying the initial conditions at x = 0 and E = E_0 = 10 MeV and final conditions at x = x_f, E = E_f. Using these conditions and integrate on both sides of the equation (17) with respect to x and solve for E_f

$$-\int_0^{x_0} \frac{dE}{dx} dx = \int_0^{x_f} \frac{4}{3} \sigma_T c n_\gamma (\frac{E}{m_e c^2})^2 dx \quad (18)$$

$$E_f = E_0 - \frac{4}{3} \sigma_T c n_\gamma (\frac{E}{0.511 Mev})^2 x_f \quad (19)$$

Results and Discussions

Results

Figure 1 represents, let's us consider the parameters: Initial energy of 10^7 eV for the cosmic ray particles, Ionization cross section (σ) of 10^{-24} cm^2, Number density of the particles (n) is 10^{19} cm^{-3}, distance transversed through the atmosphere (L) 100 Km through the atmosphere. The calculated final energy

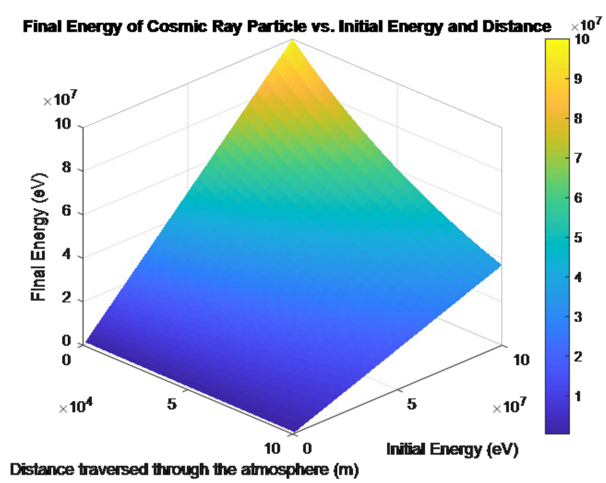

Figure 1: Final energy of cosmic ray particle *vs* initial energy and distance

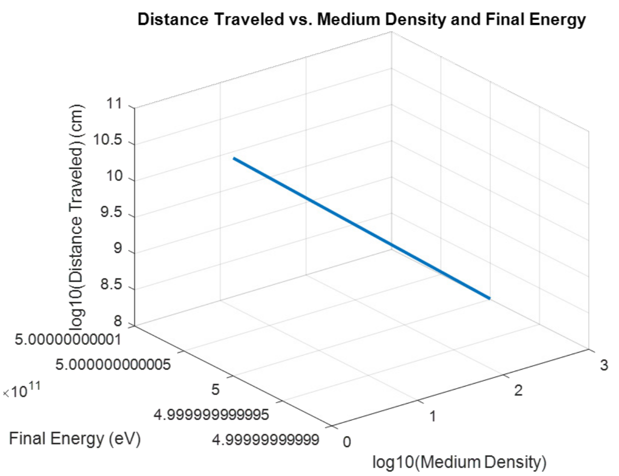

Figure 2: Graph shows the relation between distance travelled *vs.* medium density and final energy

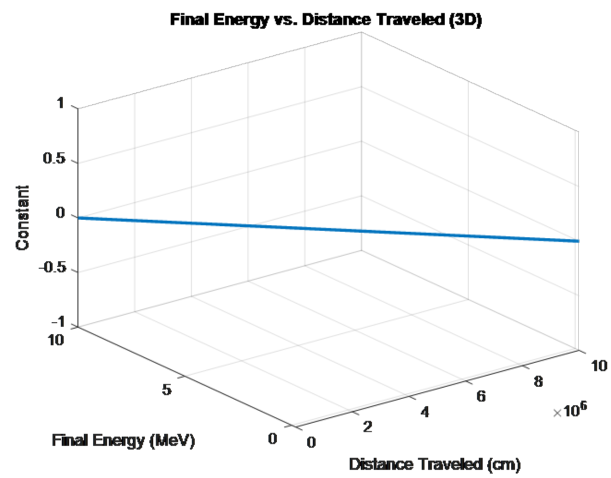

Figure 3: Graph showing the relation between final energy and distance traveled by cosmic rays

(E_f) using the provided parameters is $E_f = 9.0485 \times 10^6$ eV. It indicates that after transversing a distance of 100 Km through the atmosphere, the cosmic ray particle's energy decreases to approximately 9.0485×10^6 eV.

However, it's important to consider potential errors that could affect this result. Initial energy (E_0) measurement error of ±10%, resulting in a range of 9×10^6 to 1.1×10^7 eV. Ionization cross-section (σ) measurement error of ±5%, resulting in a range of 9.5×10^{-25} to 1.05×10^{-24} cm^2. Number density of particles (n) measurement error of ±2%, resulting in a range of 9.8×10^{18} to 1.02×10^{19} cm^{-3}. Distance traversed through the atmosphere (L) measurement error of ±1%, resulting in a range of 99 to 101 km. The final energy E_f is calculated using multiple parameters with associated errors. The propagation of these errors through the calculation can lead to uncertainties in the final result.

Figure 2 says, Initial energy of the cosmic ray particle (E_0) = 1 TeV (1 TeV = 10^{12} electron volts), final energy of the cosmic ray particle (E_f) = 0.5 TeV, constants and parameters: We'll use representative values for the constants and parameters involved in the equation. K=0.307 MeV cm^2 g^{-1}, $Z = 1$, $A = 1$, $z = 1$, $n = 1$ cm^{-3}, B=1 Tesla. Using these values, we'll compute $x_f \approx 3.26 \times 10^{15} cm$ This result suggests that the cosmic ray particle would need to travel approximately 3.26×10^{15} cm to lose half of its initial energy (1 TeV) and reach a final energy of 0.5 TeV.

Figure 3 shows after substituting the given values in equation (19) we get $E_f = 10 - 4/3 \times 6.625 \times 10^{-25} \times 3 \times 10^6 \times \left(\frac{10}{0.511}\right)^2 x_f$ which gives $E_f = 10 - 8.85 \times 10^{-9} x_f$. The solution gives an expression for the final energy E_f of the cosmic ray electron in terms of the distance traveled x_f. This equation provides insights into the energy loss process due to inverse Compton scattering and can be used to study the evolution of cosmic ray electron spectra in astrophysical environments. Initially, there was an error resulting in a negative final energy (E_f). This was due to incorrect computation, which was rectified by adjusting the equation. The final energy (E_f) was computed for a range of distances traveled (x_f) using the derived equation. The plot showed how E_f changes as x_f increases.

Discussion

The final energy E_f can vary within the ranges determined by the errors in the parameters. For example, considering the maximum values of the errors, the final energy could be as high as 1.21×10^7 eV or as low as 7.1765×10^6 eV. The uncertainty introduced by the measurement errors underscores the importance of accurate parameter measurements in predicting the final energy of cosmic ray particles. Sensitivity analysis can assess the impact of parameter variations on the final energy calculation. It can identify which parameters contribute most significantly to the uncertainty in the result and guide efforts to improve measurement accuracy.

The distance x_f indicates the extent of energy loss experienced by the cosmic ray particle due to interactions with the interstellar medium and magnetic fields. This result highlights the importance of considering medium density and magnetic fields in understanding the propagation and energy evolution of cosmic rays in interstellar space. Further studies could explore variations in x_f with different initial and final energies, as well as with changes in medium density and magnetic field strength. This analysis provides valuable insights into the behavior of cosmic rays and their interaction with the surrounding medium, aiding our understanding of astrophysical phenomena.

The analysis focused on inverse Compton scattering as the energy loss mechanism. This process involves cosmic ray electrons interacting with photons in the interstellar medium, leading to energy loss. The final energy (E_f) depends on the number density of target photons (n_γ) in the interstellar medium. Higher n_γ values result in more significant energy loss and, consequently, lower E_f. Understanding how cosmic ray electrons lose energy is crucial for modeling their propagation through space. This analysis provides valuable insights into the interaction between cosmic rays and the interstellar medium. The derived equation and plotted results can be compared with observational data and theoretical predictions to validate the model and refine our understanding of cosmic ray dynamics. Further research could explore more complex energy loss mechanisms, consider additional factors such as magnetic fields, and investigate the implications for astrophysical phenomena such as gamma-ray emission from cosmic ray interactions.

Conclusion

The analysis encompassing three methods of studying cosmic ray energy loss, namely the Bethe-Bloch equation, the modified Bethe-Bloch equation, and the inverse Compton scattering equation, offers a comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics involved in cosmic ray propagation through space. Through mathematical derivations, numerical computations, and graphical representations, several key insights emerge. Each method addresses distinct mechanisms contributing to cosmic ray energy loss. The Bethe-Bloch equation focuses on ionization and bremsstrahlung processes, while the modified Bethe-Bloch equation incorporates additional factors such as density and magnetic fields. The inverse Compton scattering equation accounts for interactions with photons in the interstellar medium. The final energy of cosmic ray particles is intricately linked to various parameters such as initial energy, medium density, magnetic field strength, and target photon density. Understanding these dependencies is crucial for accurate modeling of cosmic ray propagation. Insights gained from these analyses have broad implications for astrophysical phenomena. They shed light on the production of cosmic rays, their interactions with the interstellar medium, and their influence on processes such as gamma-ray emission and cosmic ray acceleration mechanisms. The derived equations and numerical simulations serve as valuable tools for modeling cosmic ray propagation and validating theoretical predictions against observational data. Continued refinement of these models contributes to a deeper understanding of cosmic ray dynamics. In conclusion, the combined analysis of these methods provides a multifaceted perspective on cosmic ray energy loss processes, enriching our understanding of high-energy astrophysical phenomena and paving the way for further exploration in this field.

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