Some Aspects of Low Scale Seesaw Models

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

by

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DISCIPLINE OF PHYSICS

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GANDHINAGAR

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Abstract

The Standard Model (SM) of particle physics has been very successful in explaining a wide range of experimental observations and the discovery of the Higgs boson at the Large Hadron Collider has confirmed the mode of generation of the masses of the fundamental particles via the mechanism of electroweak symmetry breaking. This has put the SM on a solid foundation. However, despite its success in explaining most of the experimental data, the SM can not address certain issues, of which two of the most important are non-zero neutrino mass and the existence of dark matter.

The most plausible way to generate small neutrino masses is the seesaw mechanism which implies neutrinos to be lepton number violating Majorana particles. This Majorana nature of the neutrinos can give rise to the neutrino-less double beta decay process in which the total lepton number is violated by two units. It is well known that the canonical high scale seesaw models are not testable in the colliders and there are various low scale seesaw models proposed in the literature motivated by their testability. Such models can have various phenomenological as well as theoretical consequences. For example, the heavy seesaw particles can lead to enhanced rates of various charged lepton flavor violating decays and the new couplings associated with the seesaw can alter the stability/metastability of the electroweak vacuum. In addition, these heavy particles can have interesting signatures in the collider experiments. In this thesis, we study various phenomenological and theoretical implications of massive neutrinos in the context of various low scale seesaw models. We also explore the possibilities of having viable candidates for dark matter in the context of seesaw models.

First, we explore the implications of the Dark-LMA (DLMA) solution to the solar neutrino problem for neutrino-less double beta decay $(0\nu\beta\beta)$. The standard Large Mixing Angle (LMA) solution corresponds to standard neutrino oscillations with $\Delta m_{21}^2 \simeq$ $7.5 \times 10^{-5} \text{ eV}^2$ and $\sin^2 \theta_{12} \simeq 0.3$, and satisfies the solar neutrino data at high significance. The DLMA solution appears as a nearly-degenerate solution to the solar neutrino problem for $\Delta m_{21}^2 \simeq 7.5 \times 10^{-5} \text{ eV}^2$ and $\sin^2 \theta_{12} \simeq 0.7$, once we allow for the existence of large non-standard neutrino interactions in addition to standard oscillations. We show that while the predictions for the effective mass governing $0\nu\beta\beta$ remains unchanged for the inverted hierarchy, that for normal hierarchy becomes higher for the Dark-LMA parameter space and moves into the "desert region" between the two. This sets a new goal for sensitivity reach for the next generation experiments if no signal is found for the inverted hierarchy by the future search programmes. We also obtain the sensitivity for the DLMA region in the future ¹³⁶Xe experiments.

In the next part of the thesis, we study the minimal type-III seesaw model in which we extend the SM by adding two $SU(2)_L$ triplet fermions with zero hypercharge to explain the origin of the non-zero neutrino masses. The lightest active neutrino will be massless in this case. We use the Casas-Ibarra parametrization for the neutrino Yukawa coupling matrix and by choosing the two triplets to be degenerate, we have only three independent real parameters, namely the mass of the triplet fermions and a complex angle. The parametrization used allows us to have low masses of the triplet fermions and large Yukawa couplings at the same time. We show that the naturalness conditions and the limits from lepton flavor violating decays provide very stringent bounds on the model parameters along with the constraints from the stability/metastability of the electroweak vacuum. We perform a detailed analysis of the model parameter space including all the constraints for both normal as well as inverted hierarchies of the light neutrino masses. We find that most of the region that is allowed by lepton flavor violating decays and naturalness falls is stable/metastable depending on the values of the SM parameters.

In addition to neutrino masses, the existence of the dark matter is another issue that points towards the need for an extension of the SM. Hence, it is important to study the implications of the models that can simultaneously address these two issues. From this point of view, we consider singlet extensions of the SM, both in the fermion and the scalar sector, to account for the generation of neutrino mass at the TeV scale and the existence of dark matter, respectively. For the neutrino sector we consider models with extra singlet fermions which can generate neutrino masses via the so called inverse or linear seesaw mechanism whereas a singlet scalar is introduced as the candidate for dark matter. The scalar particle is odd under a discrete Z_2 symmetry which ensures its stability. We show that although these two sectors are disconnected at low energy, the coupling constants of both the sectors get correlated at a high energy scale by the constraints coming from the perturbativity and stability/metastability of the electroweak vacuum. The singlet fermions try to destabilize the electroweak vacuum while the singlet scalar aids the stability. As a consequence, the electroweak vacuum may attain absolute stability even up to the Planck scale for suitable values of the parameters. We delineate the parameter space for the singlet fermion and the scalar couplings for which the electroweak vacuum remains stable/metastable and at the same time giving the correct relic density and neutrino masses and mixing angles as observed.

In addition to the simple extensions of the particle content, we also consider a class of gauged U(1) extensions of the SM, where active light neutrino masses are generated by an inverse seesaw mechanism. Along with the three right handed neutrinos needed for the cancellation of gauge anomalies, we add three singlet fermions. This allows us to consider large neutrino Yukawa couplings keeping the U(1)' symmetry breaking scale to be of the order of $\sim O(1)$ TeV. Demanding an extra Z_2 symmetry under which, the third generations of both the electrically neutral fermions are odd gives us a stable dark matter candidate. We express the U(1) charges of all the fermions in terms of the U(1) charges of the SM Higgs and the new complex scalar. We perform a comprehensive study to find out the parameter space consistent with the low energy neutrino data, vacuum stability and perturbativity, dark matter bounds and constraints from the collider searches.

Keywords: Neutrino mass, Seesaw mechanism, Majorana neutrinos, Neutrino-less double beta decay, Vacuum stability, Metastability, Low scale seesaw, Dark matter, Naturalness, Lepton flavor violation.

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List of Publications

Thesis related Publications

- I. Garg, S. Goswami, Vishnudath K. N. and N. Khan, Electroweak vacuum stability in presence of singlet scalar dark matter in TeV scale seesaw models Phys. Rev. D 96, 055020 (2017). arXiv:1706.08851
- S. Goswami, Vishnudath K. N. and N. Khan, Constraining the minimal type-III seesaw model with naturalness, lepton flavor violation, and electroweak vacuum stability Phys. Rev. D 99, 075012 (2019). arXiv:1810.11687
- Vishnudath K. N., S. Choubey and S. Goswami, *A New Sensitivity Goal for Neutrino-less Double Beta Decay Experiments* arXiv:1901.04313 (Accepted for publication in Phys. Rev. D)
- Arindam Das, Srubabati Goswami, Vishnudath K. N. and Takaaki Nomura, *Constraining a general U(1) inverse seesaw model from vacuum stability, dark matter and collider* arXiv:1905.00201 (Submitted to Phys. Rev. D)