Censored Semi-Bandits: A Framework for Resource Allocation with Censored Feedback

Arun Verma
Department of IEOR
IIT Bombay, India
v.arun@iitb.ac.in

Manjesh K. Hanawal
Department of IEOR
IIT Bombay, India
mhanwal@iitb.ac.in

Arun Rajkumar
Department of CSE
IIT Madras, India
arunr@cse.iitm.ac.in

Raman Sankaran
LinkedIn India
Bengaluru, India
rsankara@linkedin.com

Abstract

In this paper, we study Censored Semi-Bandits, a novel variant of the semi-bandits problem. The learner is assumed to have a fixed amount of resources, which it allocates to the arms at each time step. The loss observed from an arm is random and depends on the amount of resources allocated to it. More specifically, the loss equals zero if the allocation for the arm exceeds a constant (but unknown) threshold that can be dependent on the arm. Our goal is to learn a feasible allocation that minimalizes the expected loss. The problem is challenging because the loss distribution and threshold value of each arm are unknown. We study this novel setting by establishing its ‘equivalence’ to Multiple-Play Multi-Armed Bandits (MP-MAB) and Combinatorial Semi-Bandits. Exploiting these equivalences, we derive optimal algorithms for our setting using existing algorithms for MP-MAB and Combinatorial Semi-Bandits. Experiments on synthetically generated data validate performance guarantees of the proposed algorithms.

1 Introduction

Many real-life sequential resource allocation problems have a censored feedback structure. Consider, for instance, the problem of optimally allocating patrol officers (resources) across various locations in a city on a daily basis to combat opportunistic crimes. Here, a perpetrator picks a location (e.g., a deserted street) and decides to commit a crime (e.g., mugging) but does not go ahead with it if a patrol officer happens to be around in the vicinity. Though the true potential crime rate depends on the latent decision of the perpetrator, one observes feedback only when the crime is committed. Thus crimes that were planned but not committed get censored. This model of censoring is quite general and finds applications in several resource allocation problems such as police patrolling (Curtin et al., 2010), traffic regulations and enforcement (Adler et al., 2014; Rosenfeld and Kraus, 2017), poaching control (Nguyen et al., 2016; Gholami et al., 2018), supplier selection (Abernethy et al., 2016), advertisement budget allocation (Lattimore et al., 2014), among many others.

Existing approaches that deal with censored feedback in resource allocation problems fall into two broad categories. Curtin et al. (2010); Adler et al. (2014); Rosenfeld and Kraus (2017) learn good resource allocations from historical data. Nguyen et al. (2016); Gholami et al. (2018); Zhang et al. (2016); Sinha et al. (2018) pose the problem in a game-theoretic framework (opportunistic security games) and propose algorithms for optimal resource allocation strategies. While the first approach fails to capture the sequential nature of the problem, the second approach is agnostic to the user...
We consider a sequential learning problem where the threshold (user behavioral) is uniform across arms (locations). We establish that this setup is ‘equivalent’ to Multi-Play Multi-Armed Bandits (MP-MAB), where a fixed number of arms is played in each round. We also study the more general variation where the threshold is arm dependent. We establish that this setup is equivalent to Combinatorial Semi-Bandits, where a subset of arms to be played is decided by solving a combinatorial 0-1 knapsack problem.

Formally, we tackle the sequential nature of the resource allocation problem by establishing its equivalence to the MP-MAB and combinatorial semi-bandits framework. By exploiting this equivalence for our proposed threshold-based behavioral model, we develop novel resource allocation algorithms by adapting existing algorithms and provide optimal regret guarantees for the same.

**Related Work:** The problem of resource allocation for tackling crimes has received significant interest in recent times. Curtin et al. (2010) employ a static maximum coverage strategy for spatial police allocation while Nguyen et al. (2016) and Gholami et al. (2018) study game-theoretic and adversarial perpetrator strategies. We, on the other hand, restrict ourselves to a non-adversarial setting. (Adler et al., 2014) and Rosenfeld and Kraus (2017) look at traffic police resource deployment and consider the optimization aspects of the problem using real-time traffic, etc., which differs from the main focus of our work. Zhang et al. (2015) investigate dynamic resource allocation in the context of police patrolling and poaching for opportunistic criminals. Here they attempt to learn a model of criminals using a dynamic Bayesian network. Our approach proposes simpler and realistic modeling of perpetrators where the underlying structure can be exploited efficiently.

We pose our problem in the exploration-exploitation paradigm, which involves solving the MP-MAB and combinatorial 0-1 knapsack problem. It is different from the bandits with Knapsacks setting studied in Badanidiyuru et al. (2018), where resources get consumed in every round. The work of Abernethy et al. (2016) and Jain and Jamieson (2018) are similar to us in the sense that they are also threshold-based settings. However, the thresholding we employ naturally fits our problem and significantly differs from theirs. Specifically, their thresholding is on a sample generated from an underlying distribution, whereas we work in a Bernoulli setting where the thresholding is based on the allocation. Resource allocation with semi-bandits feedback (Lattimore et al., 2014, 2015; Dagan and Koby, 2018) study a related but less general setup where the reward is based only on allocation and a hidden threshold. Our setting requires an additional unknown parameter for each arm, a ‘mean loss,’ which also affects the reward.

Allocation problems in the combinatorial setting have been explored in Cesa-Bianchi and Lugosi (2012); Chen et al. (2013); Rajkumar and Agarwal (2014); Combes et al. (2015); Chen et al. (2016); Wang and Chen (2018). Even though these are not related to our setting directly, we derive explicit connections to a sub-problem of our algorithm to the setup of Komiyama et al. (2015) and Wang and Chen (2018).

### 2 Problem Setting

We consider a sequential learning problem where $K$ denotes the number of arms (locations), and $Q$ denotes the amount of divisible resources. The loss at arm $i \in [K]$ where $[K] := \{1, 2, \ldots, K\}$, is Bernoulli distributed with rate $\mu_i \in [0, 1]$. Each arm can be assigned a fraction of resource that decides the feedback observed and the loss incurred from that arm – if the allocated resource is smaller than a certain threshold $\theta_i$, the loss incurred is the realization of the arm, and it is observed. Otherwise, the realization is unobserved, and the loss incurred is zero. Let $a := \{a_i : i \in [K]\}$, where $a_i \in [0, 1]$, denotes the resource allocated to arm $i$. For each $i \in [K]$, let $\theta_i \in (0, 1]$ denotes the threshold associated with arm $i$ and is such that a loss is incurred at arm $i$ only if $a_i < \theta_i$. An allocation vector $a$ is said to be feasible if $\sum_{i \in [K]} a_i \leq Q$ and set of all feasible allocations is denoted as $A_Q$. The goal is to find a feasible resource allocation that results in a maximum reduction in the mean loss incurred.

---

1 One could consider a smooth function instead of a step function, but the analysis is more involved, and our results need not generalize straightforwardly.
In our setup, resources may be allocated to multiple arms. However, loss from each of the allocated arms may not be observed depending on the amount of resources allocated to them. We thus have a version of the partial monitoring system (Cesa-Bianchi et al., 2006; Bartók and Szepesvári, 2012; Bartók et al., 2014) with semi-bandit feedback, and we refer to it as censored semi-bandits (CSB). The vectors \( \theta := \{ \theta_i \}_{i \in [K]} \) and \( \mu := \{ \mu_j \}_{j \in [K]} \) are unknown and identify an instance of CSB problem. Henceforth we identify a CSB instance as \( P = (\mu, \theta, Q) \in [0, 1]^K \times (0, 1]^K \times \mathbb{R}_+ \) and denote collection of CSB instances as \( \mathcal{P}_\text{CSB} \). As \( K = |\mu| \), \( K \) is known (implicitly) from an instance of CSB. For simplicity of discussion, we assume that \( \mu_1 \leq \mu_2 \leq \ldots \leq \mu_K \), but the algorithms are not aware of this ordering. For instance \( P \in \mathcal{P}_\text{CSB} \), the optimal allocation can be computed by the following 0-1 knapsack problem

\[
a^* \in \arg \min_{a \in A_Q} \sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_i\}}. \tag{1}
\]

Interaction between the environment and a learner is given in Algorithm 1.

**Algorithm 1 CSB Learning Protocol on instance \((\mu, \theta, Q)\)**

For each round \( t \):

1. **Environment** generates a vector \( X_t = (X_{t,1}, X_{t,2}, \ldots, X_{t,K}) \in \{0, 1\}^K \), where \( \mathbb{E}[X_{t,i}] = \mu_i \) and the sequence \( (X_{t,i})_{i \geq 1} \) is i.i.d. for all \( i \in [K] \).
2. **Learner** picks an allocation vector \( a_t \in A_Q \).
3. **Feedback and Loss:** The learner observes a random feedback \( Y_t = \{Y_{t,i} : i \in [K]\} \), where \( Y_{t,i} = X_{t,i} \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_i\}} \) and incurs loss \( \sum_{i \in [K]} Y_{t,i} \).

The goal of the learner is to find a feasible resource allocation strategy at every round such that the cumulative loss is minimized. Specifically, we measure the performance of a policy that selects allocations \( \{a_t\}_{t \geq 1} \) over a period of \( T \) in terms of expected (pseudo) regret given by

\[
\mathbb{E}[R_T] = \sum_{t=1}^T \sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \left( \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_i\}} - \mathbb{1}_{\{a^*_t < \theta_i\}} \right). \tag{2}
\]

A good policy should have sub-linear expected regret, i.e., \( \mathbb{E}[R_T] / T \to 0 \) as \( T \to \infty \).

### 3 Identical Threshold for All Arms

In this section, we focus on the particular case of the censored semi-bands problem where \( \theta_i = \theta_c \) for all \( i \in [K] \). With abuse of notation, we continue to denote an instance of CSB with the same threshold as \( (\mu, \theta_c, Q) \), where \( \theta_c \in (0, 1] \) is the same threshold.

**Definition 1.** For a given loss vector \( \mu \) and resource \( Q \), we say that thresholds \( \theta_c \) and \( \hat{\theta}_c \) are allocation equivalent if the following holds:

\[
\min_{a \in A_Q} \sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_c\}} = \min_{a \in A_Q} \sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \hat{\theta}_c\}}.
\]

Though \( \theta_c \) can take any value in the interval \((0, 1]\), an allocation equivalent to it can be confined to a finite set. The following lemma shows that a search for an allocation equivalent can be restricted to \([K - Q + 1]\) elements.

**Lemma 1.** For any \( \theta_c \in (0, 1] \) and \( Q \geq \theta_c \), let \( M = \min\{\lfloor Q/\theta_c \rfloor, K \} \) and \( \hat{\theta}_c = Q/M \). Then \( \theta_c \) and \( \hat{\theta}_c \) are allocation equivalent. Further, \( \theta_c \in \Theta \) where \( \Theta = \{Q/K, Q/(K-1), \ldots, \min\{1, Q\}\} \).

Let \( M = \min\{\lfloor Q/\theta_c \rfloor, K \} \). In the following, when arms are sorted in the increasing order of mean losses, we refer to the last \( M \) arms as the bottom-\( M \) arms and the remaining arms as top-(\( K - M \))
arms. It is easy to note that an optimal allocation with the same threshold $\theta_c$ is to allocate $\theta_c$ resource to each of the bottom-$M$ arms and allocate the remaining resources to the other arms. Lemma 1 shows that range of allocation equivalent $\hat{\theta}_c$ for any instance $(\mu, \theta_c, Q)$ is finite. Once this value is found, the problem reduces to identifying the bottom-$M$ arms and assigning resource $\theta_c$ to each one of them to minimize the mean loss. The latter part is equivalent to solving a Multiple-Play Multi-Armed Bandits problem, as discussed next.

### 3.1 Equivalence to Multiple-play Multi-armed Bandits

In stochastic Multiple-Play Muti-Armed Bandits (MP-MAB), a learner can play a subset of arms in each round known as superarm (Anantharam et al., 1987). The size of each superarm is fixed (and known). The mean loss of a superarm is the sum of the means of its constituent arms. In each round, the learner plays a superarm and observes the loss from each arm played (semi-bandit). The goal of the learner is to select a superarm that has the smallest mean loss. A policy in MP-MAB selects a superarm in each round based on the past information. Its performance is measured in terms of regret defined as the difference between cumulative loss incurred by the policy and that incurred by playing an optimal superarm in each round. Let $(\mu, m) \in [0,1]^2 \times \mathbb{N}_+$ denote an instance of MP-MAB where $\mu$ denote the mean loss vector, and $m \leq K$ denotes the size of each superarm. Let $\mathcal{P}_{CSB}^m \subset \mathcal{P}_{CSB}$ denote the set of CSB instances with the same threshold for all arms. For any $(\mu, \theta_c, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB}^m$ with $K$ arms and known threshold $\theta_c$, let $(\mu, m)$ be an instance of MP-MAB with $K$ arms and each arm has the same Bernoulli distribution as the corresponding arm in the CSB instance with $m = K - M$, where $M = \min\{|Q/\theta_c|,K\}$ as earlier. Let $\mathcal{P}_{MP}$ denote the set of resulting MP-MAB problems and $f: \mathcal{P}_{CSB} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}_{MP}$ denote the above transformation.

Let $\pi$ be a policy on $\mathcal{P}_{MP}$. $\pi$ can also be applied on any $(\mu, \theta_c, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB}^m$ with known $\theta_c$ to decide which set of arms are allocated resource as follows: in round $t$, let the information $(L_1, Y_1, L_2, Y_2, \ldots, L_{t-1}, Y_{t-1})$ collected on an CSB instance, where $L_s$ is the set of $K - M$ arms where no resource is applied and $Y_s$ is the samples observed from these arms. In round $t$, this information is given to $\pi$ which returns a set $L_t$ with $K - M$ elements. Then all arms other than arms in $L_t$ are given resource $\theta_c$. Let this policy on $(\mu, \theta_c, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB}$ be denoted as $\pi'$. In a similar way a policy $\beta$ on $\mathcal{P}_{CSB}$ can be adapted to yield a policy for $\mathcal{P}_{MP}$ as follows: in round $t$, let the information $(S_1, Y_1, S_2, Y_2, \ldots, S_{t-1}, Y_{t-1})$ collected on an MP-MAB instance, where $S_1$ is the superarm played in round $s$ and $Y_s$ is the associated loss observed from each arm in $S_s$, is given to $\pi$ which returns a set $S_t$ of $K - M$ arms where no resources has to be applied. The superarm corresponding to $S_t$ is then played. Let this policy on $\mathcal{P}_{MP}$ be denoted as $\beta'$. Note that when $\theta_c$ is known, the mapping is invertible. The next proposition gives regret equivalence between the MP-MAB problem and CSB problem with a known same threshold.

**Proposition 1.** Let $P := (\mu, \theta_c, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB}^m$ with known $\theta_c$ then the regret of $\pi$ on $P$ is same as the regret of $\pi'$ on $f(P)$. Similarly, let $P' := (\mu, m) \in \mathcal{P}_{MP}$, then regret of a policy $\beta$ on $P'$ is same as the regret of $\beta'$ on $f^{-1}(P')$. Thus the set $\mathcal{P}_{CSB}^m$ with a known $\theta_c$ is 'regret equivalent' to $\mathcal{P}_{MP}$, i.e., $\mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{CSB}^m) = \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{MP})$.

**Lower bound:** As a consequence of the above equivalence and one to one correspondence between the MP-MAB and CSB with the same threshold (known), a lower bound on MP-MAB is also a lower bound on CSB with the same threshold. Hence the following lower bound given for any strongly consistent algorithm (Anantharam et al., 1987, Theorem 3.1) is also a lower bound on the CSB problem with the same threshold:

$$
\lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\mathbb{E}[\mathcal{R}_T]}{\log T} \geq \sum_{m \in [K \setminus [K-M]} \frac{(1 - o(1))(\mu - \mu_{K-M})}{d(\mu_{K-M}, \mu)} = 1,
$$

where $d(p, q)$ is the Kullback-Leibler (KL) divergence between two Bernoulli distributions with parameter $p$ and $q$. Also note that we are in loss setting.

The above proposition suggests that any algorithm which works well for the MP-MAB also works well for the CSB once the threshold is known. Hence one can use algorithms like MP-TS (Komiyama et al., 2015) and ESCB (Combes et al., 2015) once an allocation equivalent to $\theta_c$ is found. MP-TS uses Thompson Sampling, whereas ESCB uses UCB (Upper Confidence Bound) and KL-UCB type indices. One can use any of these algorithms. But we adapt MP-TS to our setting as it gives the better empirical performance and shown to achieve optimal regret bound for Bernoulli distributions.
3.2 Algorithm: CSB-ST

We develop an algorithm named CSB-ST for solving the Censored Semi Bandits problem with Same Threshold. It exploits result in Lemma 1 and equivalence established in Proposition 1 to learn a good estimate of threshold and minimize the regret using a MP-MAB algorithm. CSB-ST consists of two phases, namely, threshold estimation and regret minimization.

CSB-ST Algorithm for solving the Censored Semi Bandits problem with Same Threshold

\begin{algorithm}
\begin{algorithmic}
\caption{CSB-ST Algorithm for solving the Censored Semi Bandits problem with Same Threshold}
\footnotesize
\setcounter{line}{1}
\begin{itemize}
\item[] \textbf{Input:} $K, Q, \delta, \epsilon$
\item[] \textbf{\textbackslash \textbackslash Threshold Estimation Phase \textbackslash \textbackslash}
\item[] 1: Initialize $C = 0$, $l = 0$, $u = |\Theta|$, $i = \lceil u / 2 \rceil$
\item[] 2: Set $\Theta$ as Lemma 1, $T_{\theta_e} = 0$, $W = \log(\log(|\Theta|) / \delta) / (\max\{1, |Q|\} \log(1 / (1 - \epsilon)))$
\item[] 3: \textbf{while} $i \neq u$ \textbf{do}
\item[] 4: \hspace{0.5cm} Set $\hat{\theta}_e = \Theta[i]$
\item[] 5: \hspace{0.5cm} $A_i$ $\leftarrow$ first $Q/\hat{\theta}_e$ arms. Allocate $\hat{\theta}_e$ resource to each arm $i \in A_i$
\item[] 6: \hspace{0.5cm} If loss observed for any arm $i \in A_i$ then set $l = i$, $i = l = \lceil \frac{u+l}{2} \rceil$, $C = 0$ else $C = C + 1$
\item[] 7: \hspace{0.5cm} If $C = W$ then set $u = i$, $i = u - \lceil \frac{u-l}{2} \rceil$, $C = 0$
\item[] 8: \hspace{0.5cm} $T_{\theta_e} = T_{\theta_e} + 1$
\item[] 9: \textbf{end while}
\item[] \textbf{\textbackslash \textbackslash Regret Minimization Phase \textbackslash \textbackslash}
\item[] 10: Set $M = Q/\hat{\theta}_e$ and \forall $i \in [K]: S_i = 1, F_i = 1$
\item[] 11: \textbf{for} $t = T_{\theta_e} + 1, T_{\theta_e} + 2, \ldots, T$ \textbf{do}
\item[] 12: \hspace{0.5cm} \forall $i \in [K]: \mu_i(t) = \beta(S_i, F_i)$
\item[] 13: \hspace{0.5cm} $L_t$ $\leftarrow$ (K-M) arms with smallest estimates
\item[] 14: \hspace{0.5cm} \forall $i \in L_t$: allocate no resource to arm $i$. \forall $j \in K \setminus L_t$: allocate $\hat{\theta}_e$ resources to arm $j$
\item[] 15: \hspace{0.5cm} \forall $i \in L_t$: observe $X_{t,i}$. Update $S_i = S_i + X_{t,i}$ and $F_i = F_i + 1 - X_{t,i}$
\item[] 16: \textbf{end for}
\end{itemize}
\end{algorithmic}
\end{algorithm}

Threshold Estimation Phase: This phase finds a threshold $\hat{\theta}_e$ that is allocation equivalent to the underlying threshold $\theta_e$ with high probability by doing a binary search over the set $\Theta = \{Q/K, Q/(K - 1), \ldots, \min\{1, Q\}\}$. The elements of $\Theta$ are arranged in increasing order and are candidates for $\theta_e$. The search starts by taking $\hat{\theta}_e$ to be the middle element in $\Theta$ and allocating $\hat{\theta}_e$ resource to first $Q/\hat{\theta}_e$ arms (denoted as set $A_i$ in Line 5). If a loss is observed at any of these arms, it implies that $\hat{\theta}_e$ is an underestimate of $\theta_e$. All the candidates lower than the current value of $\hat{\theta}_e$ in $\Theta$ are eliminated, and the search is repeated in the remaining half of the elements again by starting with the middle element (Line 6). If no loss is observed for consecutive $W$ rounds, then $\hat{\theta}_e$ is possibly an overestimate. Accordingly, all the candidates larger than the current value of $\hat{\theta}_e$ in $\Theta$ are eliminated, and the search is repeated starting with the middle element in the remaining half (Line 7). The variable $C$ keeps track of the number of the consecutive rounds for which no loss is observed. It changes to 0 either after observing a loss or if no loss is observed for consecutive $W$ rounds.

Note that if $\hat{\theta}_e$ is an underestimate and no loss is observed for consecutive $W$ rounds, then $\hat{\theta}_e$ will be reduced, which leads to a wrong estimate of $\hat{\theta}_e$. To avoid this, we set the value of $W$ such that the probability of happening of such an event is low. The next lemma gives a bound on the number of rounds needed to find allocation equivalent for threshold $\theta_e$ with high probability.

\textbf{Lemma 2.} Let $\langle \mu, \theta_e, Q \rangle$ be an CSB instance such that $\mu_1 \geq \epsilon > 0$. Then with probability at least $1 - \delta$, the number of rounds needed by threshold estimation phase of CSB-ST to find the allocation equivalent for threshold $\theta_e$ is bounded as

$$T_{\theta_e} \leq \frac{\log(\log(|\Theta|) / \delta)}{\max\{1, |Q|\} \log(1 / (1 - \epsilon)) \log(|\Theta|)}.$$ 

Once $\hat{\theta}_e$ is known, $\mu$ needs to be estimated. The resources can be allocated such that no losses observe for maximum $M$ arms. As our goal is to minimize the mean loss, we have to select $M$ arms with the highest mean loss and then allocate $\hat{\theta}_e$ to each of them. It is equivalent to find $K - M$ arms
with the least mean loss then allocate no resources to these arms and observe their losses. These losses are then used for updating the empirical estimate of the mean loss of arms.

**Regret Minimization Phase:** The regret minimization phase of CSB-ST adapts Multiple-Play Thompson Sampling (MP-TS) (Komiyama et al., 2015) for our setting. It works as follows: initially we set the prior distribution of each arms as the Beta distribution \( \beta(1, 1) \), which is same as Uniform distribution on \([0, 1]\). \( S_i \) represents the number of round when loss is observed whereas \( F_i \) represents the number of round when loss is not observed. Let \( S_i(t) \) and \( F_i(t) \) denotes the values of \( S_i \) and \( F_i \) in the beginning of round \( t \). In round \( t \), a sample \( \mu_i \) is independently drawn from \( \beta(S_i(t), F_i(t)) \) for each arm \( i \in [K] \). \( \mu_i \) values are ranked by their increasing values. The first \( K - M \) arm assigned no resources (denoted as set \( L_i \) in Line 13) while each of the remaining \( M \) arms are allocated \( \theta_i \) resources. The loss \( X_{t,i} \) is observed for each arm \( i \in L_i \) and then success and failure counts are updated by setting \( S_i = S_i + X_{t,i} \) and \( F_i = F_i + 1 - X_{t,i} \).

### 3.2.1 Regret Upper Bound

For instance \((\mu, \theta, Q)\) and any feasible allocation \( a \in A_Q \), we define \( \nabla_a = \sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \left( 1_{\{a_i < \theta_i\}} - 1_{\{a_i \geq \theta_i\}} \right) \) and \( \nabla_m = \max_{a \in A_Q} \nabla_a \). We are now ready state the regret bounds.

**Theorem 1.** Let \( \mu_1 \geq \epsilon > 0 \), \( W_T = T \log(2(|\theta|)) \) and \( \delta = 1/T \) in CSB-ST. Then the regret of CSB-ST is upper bound as

\[
\mathbb{E}[R_T] \leq W_T \log(2(|\theta|)) \nabla_m + O \left( (\log T)^{2/3} \right) + \sum_{i \in [K] \setminus [K-M]} \frac{(\mu_i - \mu_{K-M}) \log T}{d(\mu_{K-M}, \mu_i)}.
\]

The first term in the regret bound in Theorem 1 corresponds to the length of the threshold estimation phase, and the remaining parts correspond to the expected regret in the regret minimization phase. Note that the assumption \( \mu_1 \geq \epsilon \) is only required to guarantee that the threshold estimation phase terminates in the finite number of rounds. This assumption is not needed to get the bound on expected regret in the regret minimization phase. The assumption \( \mu_{K-M} < \mu_{K-M+1} \) ensures that Kullback-Leibler divergence in the bound is well defined. This assumption is also equivalent to assume that the set of top-\( M \) arms is unique.

**Corollary 1.** The regret of CSB-ST is asymptotically optimal.

The proof of Corollary 1 follows by comparing the above bound with the lower bound in Eq. (3).

### 4 Different Thresholds

In this section, we consider a more difficult problem where the threshold may not be the same for all arms. Let \( KP(\mu, \theta, Q) \) denote a 0-1 knapsack problem with capacity \( Q \) and \( K \) items where item \( i \) has weight \( \theta_i \) and value \( \mu_i \). Our first result gives the optimal allocation for an instance in \( \mathcal{P}_{CSB} \):

**Proposition 2.** Let \( P = (\mu, \theta, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB} \). Then the optimal allocation for \( P \) is a solution of \( KP(\mu, \theta, Q) \) problem.

The proof of the above proposition and computational issues of the 0-1 knapsack with fractional values of \( a \) are given in the supplementary. We next discuss when two threshold vectors are allocation equivalent. Extending the definition of allocation equivalence to threshold vectors, we say that two vectors \( \theta \) and \( \theta^* \) are allocation equivalent if minimum mean loss in instances \((\mu, \theta, Q)\) and \((\mu, \theta^*, Q)\) are the same for any loss vector \( \mu \) and resource \( Q \). This equivalence allows us to look for estimated thresholds within some tolerance. We need the following notations to make this formal.

For an instance \( P := (\mu, \theta, Q) \), recall that \( a^* = (a^*_1, \ldots, a^*_K) \) denotes the optimal allocation. Let \( r = Q - \sum_{i; a_i > 0} \theta_i \), where \( r \) is the residual resources after the optimal allocation. Define \( \gamma := r/K \).

Any problem instance with \( \gamma = 0 \) becomes a ‘hopeless’ problem instance as the only vector that is allocation equivalent to \( \theta \) is \( \theta \) itself, which demands \( \theta_i \) values to be estimated with full precision to achieve optimal allocation. However, if \( \gamma > 0 \), an optimal allocation can be still be found with small errors in the estimates of \( \theta_i \) as shown next.
Lemma 3. Let γ > 0 and ∀i ∈ [K] : ˆθ_i ∈ [θ_i, θ_i + γ]. Then for any μ ∈ [0, 1]^K and Q, the θ and ˆθ are allocation equivalent.

The proof follows by an application of Theorem 3.2 in Hifi and Mhalla (2013) which gives conditions for two weight vectors θ_1 and θ_2 to have the same solution in KP(μ, θ_1, Q) and KP(μ, θ_2, Q) for any μ and Q. Once we estimate the threshold θ with accuracy so that the estimate ˆθ is an allocation equivalent of θ, the problem is equivalent to solving the KP(μ, θ, Q). The latter part is equivalent to solving a combinatorial semi-bandits as we establish next. Combinatorial semi-bandits are the generalization of MP-MAB, where the size of the superarms need not be the same in each round.

Proposition 3. The CSB problem with known threshold vector θ is regret equivalent to a combinatorial semi-bandits where Oracle uses KP(μ, θ, Q) to identify the optimal subset of arms.

4.1 Algorithm: CSB-DT

We develop an algorithm named CSB-DT for solving the Censored Semi Bandits problem with Different Threshold. It exploits the result of Lemma 3 and equivalence established in Proposition 3 to learn a good estimate of the threshold for each arm and minimizes the regret using an algorithm from combinatorial semi-bandits. CSB-DT also consists of two phases: threshold estimation and regret minimization.

CSB-DT Algorithm for solving the Censored Semi Bandits problem with Different Threshold

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{Input:} K, Q, δ, ϵ, γ
  \item \textbf{Threshold Estimation Phase}\n  1: Initialize ∀i ∈ [K] : ˆθ_i = 0, θ_t,i = 1, ˆθ_t,i = 0, C_t = 0.
  2: Set θ_t,i = 0, W = log(K log_2((1 + 1/γ))/δ)/log(1/(1 - ϵ))
  3: ∀i ∈ [(Q)] : allocate ˆθ_i = 0.5 resource. ∀j ∈ [(Q) + 1, K] : allocate ˆθ_j = Q−[(Q)]/2 resources
  4: while ˆθ_t,i = 0 for any i ∈ [K] do
  5: \hspace{1em} for i = 1, ..., K do
  6: \hspace{2em} if loss observe for arm i with ˆθ_t,i = 0 and θ_t,i < ˆθ_i then
  7: \hspace{3em} Set ˆθ_t,i, ˆθ_i = (θ_t,i + θ_t,i)/2, C_t = 0. If available allocate resource ˆθ_i
  8: \hspace{2em} else
  9: \hspace{3em} if allocated resources is ˆθ_i then reset C_t = C_t + 1
  10: \hspace{3em} if C_t = W and θ_t,i = 0 then
  11: \hspace{4em} Set θ_t,i = ˆθ_i, θ_i = (θ_t,i + θ_t,i)/2, C_t = 0. If available allocate resource ˆθ_i
  12: \hspace{3em} if θ_t,i − ˆθ_t,i ≤ γ then set ˆθ_t,i = 1 and ˆθ_i = θ_t,i
  13: \hspace{2em} end if
  14: \hspace{2em} end if
  15: end for
  16: while free resources are available do
  17: \hspace{2em} Allocate ˆθ_t resources to a new randomly chosen arm i from the arms having ˆθ_t,i = 1
  18: \hspace{2em} end while
  19: T_θ = T_θ + 1
  20: end while
  \item \textbf{Regret Minimization Phase}\n  21: ∀i ∈ [K] : S_i = 1, F_i = 1
  22: for t = T_θ + 1, T_θ + 2, ..., T do
  23: \hspace{1em} ∀i ∈ [K] : ˆμ_i(t) ← Beta(S_i, F_i)
  24: \hspace{1em} L_t ← Oracle(KP(μ(t), θ_t, Q))
  25: \hspace{1em} ∀i ∈ L_t : allocate no resource to arm i. ∀j ∈ K \ L_t : allocate ˆθ_j resources to arm j
  26: \hspace{1em} ∀i ∈ L_t : observe X_{t,i}. Update S_i = S_i + X_{t,i} and F_i = F_i + 1 − X_{t,i}
  27: end for
\end{itemize}

Threshold Estimation Phase: This phase finds a threshold that is allocation equivalent of θ with high probability. This is achieved by ensuring that ˆθ_i ∈ [θ_i, θ_i + γ] for all i (Lemma 3). For each arm
\( i \in [K] \) a binary search is performed over the interval \([0, 1]\) by maintaining variables \( \hat{\theta}_i, \theta_{l,i}, \theta_{u,i}, \theta_{g,i} \), and \( C_i \) where \( \hat{\theta}_i \) is the current estimate of \( \theta_i \); \( \theta_{l,i} \) and \( \theta_{u,i} \) denote the lower and upper bound of the binary search region for arm \( i \); and \( \theta_{g,i} \) indicates whether current estimate lies in the interval \([\theta_{l,i}, \theta_{u,i} + \gamma]\). In each round, the threshold estimate of arms are first updated sequentially and then tested on their respective arms. \( C_i \) keeps counts of consecutive rounds without no loss for \( \hat{\theta}_i \). It changes to 0 either after observing a loss or if no loss is observed for consecutive \( W \) rounds.

The threshold estimation phase starts with allocating 0.5 resource for first \( [Q] \) arms and \((Q - \lfloor Q/2 \rfloor)/(K - [Q])\) for the remaining arms (Line 3). In each round, allocated resource are applied on each arm and based on the observations their estimates and the allocated resource are updated sequentially starting from 1 to \( K \) as follows. If a loss is observed for arm \( i \) having bad threshold estimate \( (\theta_{g,i} = 0) \) and \( \theta_{l,i} < \hat{\theta}_i \), then it implies that \( \hat{\theta}_i \) is an underestimate of \( \theta_{u,i} \) and the following actions are performed − 1) lower end of search region is increased to \( \hat{\theta}_i \); i.e., \( \theta_{l,i} = \hat{\theta}_i \); 2) its estimate \( \hat{\theta}_i \) is set to \((\theta_{u,i} + \theta_{l,i})/2\); if available allocate \( \hat{\theta}_i \) resource to arm \( i \); and 4) set \( C_i = 0 \) (Line 7).

If no loss is observed after allocating \( \hat{\theta}_i \) resources for \( W \) successive rounds for arm \( i \) with bad threshold estimate, then it implies that \( \hat{\theta}_i \) is overestimated and following actions are performed − 1) the upper end of the search region is changed to \( \hat{\theta}_i \), i.e, \( \theta_{u,i} = \hat{\theta}_i \); 2) its estimate \( \hat{\theta}_i \) is set to \((\theta_{u,i} + \theta_{l,i})/2\); and 3) if available allocate \( \theta_{u,i} \) resource to arm \( i \) (Line 11). Further, whether goodness of \( \hat{\theta}_i \) holds, i.e., \( \hat{\theta}_i \in [\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma] \) is checked by condition \( \theta_{u,i} - \theta_{l,i} \leq \gamma \). If the condition holds, the threshold estimation of arm is within desired accuracy and this is indicated by setting \( \theta_{g,i} \) to 1 and \( \hat{\theta}_i = \theta_{u,i} \) (Line 12). Any unassigned resources are given to randomly chosen arms having good threshold estimates (all arms with \( \theta_{g,i} = 1 \)) where each arm gets only \( \hat{\theta}_i \) resources (Line 17).

The value of \( W \) in CSB-DT is set such that the probability of estimated threshold does not lie in \([\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma]\) for all arms is bounded by \( \delta \). Following lemma gives the bounds on the number of rounds needed to find the allocation equivalent for threshold vector \( \theta \) with high probability.

**Lemma 4.** Let \((\mu, \theta, Q)\) be an instance of CSB such that \( \gamma > 0 \) and \( \mu_1 \geq \epsilon > 0 \). Then with probability at least \( 1 - \delta \), the number of rounds needed by threshold estimation phase of CSB-DT to find the allocation equivalent for threshold vector \( \theta \) is bounded as

\[
T_{\theta_{a}} \leq \frac{K \log(K \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma]))}{\max\{1, [Q]\}} \log(1/(1 - \epsilon)) \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma]).
\]

**Regret Minimization Phase:** For this phase, we could use an algorithm that works well for the combinatorial semi-bandits, like SDCB (Chen et al., 2016) and CTS (Wang and Chen, 2018). CTS uses Thompson Sampling, whereas SDCB uses the UCB type index. We adopt the CTS to our setting due to better empirical performance. This phase is similar to the regret minimization phase of CSB-ST except that superarm to play is selected by Oracle that uses \( KL(\mu(t), \theta, Q) \) to identify the arms where the learner has to allocate no resources.

### 4.1.1 Regret Upper Bound

Let \( \nabla_a \) and \( \nabla_m \) be defined as in Section 3.2.1. Let \( \gamma > 0 \), \( S_a = \{i : \alpha_i < \theta_i\} \) for any feasible allocation \( \alpha \) and \( k^* = |S_a^*| \). We redefine \( W_T = \log(K \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma]))/\log(1/(1 - \epsilon)) \).

**Theorem 2.** Let \((\mu, \theta, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB} \) such that \( \gamma > 0 \), \( \mu_1 \geq \epsilon \), and \( T > W_T \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma]) \). Set \( \delta = 1/T \) in CSB-DT. Then the expected regret of CSB-DT is upper bound as

\[
\mathbb{E}[R_T] \leq \left(\frac{K W_T \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma])}{\max\{1, [Q]\}} \right) \nabla_m + \left( \sum_{i \in [K]} \max_{\theta_{a,i} \in S_a} \frac{8 |S_a| \log T}{\nabla_a - 2(k^* + 2) \eta} \right) + \left( \frac{K(K - Q)^2}{\eta^2} + \frac{8 \alpha_1}{\eta^2 \eta} \left( \frac{4}{\eta^2} + 1 \right) k^* \log \frac{k^*}{\eta} + 3K \right) \nabla_m
\]

for any \( \eta \) such that \( \forall a \in A_Q, \nabla_a > 2(k^* + 2) \eta \) and a problem independent constant \( \alpha_1 \).

The first term of expected regret is due to the threshold estimation phase. Threshold estimation takes \( T_{\theta_{a}} \) rounds to complete, and \( \nabla_m \) is the maximum regret that can be incurred in any round. Then the
maximum regret due to threshold estimation is bounded by $T \theta \nabla m$. The remaining terms correspond to the regret due to the regret minimization phase. Further, the expected regret of CSB-DT can be shown be $\mathbb{E}[R_T] \leq O(K \log T/\nabla_{\text{min}})$, where $\nabla_{\text{min}}$ is the minimum gap between the mean loss of optimal allocation and any non-optimal allocation.

5 Experiments

We ran the computer simulations to evaluate the empirical performance of proposed algorithms. Our simulations involved two synthetically generated instances. In Instance 1, the threshold is the same for all arm, whereas Instance 2, it varies across arms. The details of the instances are as follows:

**Instance 1 (Identical Threshold):** It has $K = 20, Q = 7, \theta_c = 0.7, \delta = 0.1, \epsilon = 0.1$ and $T = 10000$. The loss of arm $i$ is Bernoulli distribution with parameter $0.25 + (i - 1)/50$.

**Instance 2 (Different Thresholds):** It has $K = 5, Q = 2, \delta = 0.1, \epsilon = 0.1, \gamma = 10^{-3}$ and $T = 5000$. The mean loss vector is $\mu = [0.9, 0.89, 0.87, 0.58, 0.3]$ and corresponding threshold vector is $\theta = [0.7, 0.7, 0.7, 0.6, 0.35]$. The loss of arm $i$ is Bernoulli distributed with parameter $\mu_i$.

For Instance 1, we have only varied the number of resource $Q$, and regret of CSB-ST is shown in Fig. 1. We observe that when resources are small, the learner can allocate resources to a few arms but observes loss from more arms. On the other hand, when resources are more, the learner allocates resources to more arms and observes loss from fewer arms. Thus as resources increase, we move from semi-bandit feedback to bandit feedback and hence regret increase with the resources. Next, we have only varied $\theta_c$ in Instance 1, and the regret of CSB-ST is shown in Fig. 2. Similar trends are observed as the decrease in threshold leads to an increase in the number of arms that can be allocated resources and vice-versa. Therefore the amount of feedback decreases as the threshold decreases and leads to more regret. We repeated the experiment 100 times and plotted the regret with a 95% confidence interval (the vertical line on each curve shows the confidence interval). The empirical results validate sub-linear bounds for our algorithms.

We also compare the performance of CSB-DT against the CSB-DT-UCB algorithm, which uses the UCB type index as used in the SDCB algorithm (Chen et al., 2016) on Instance 2. As shown in Fig. 3, as expected, Thompson Sampling (TS) based CSB-DT outperforms its UCB based counterpart CSB-DT-UCB. The pseudo-code of CSB-DT-UCB is given in the supplementary material.

6 Conclusion and Future Extensions

In this work, we proposed a novel framework for resource allocation problems using a variant of semi-bandits named censored semi-bandits. In our setup, loss observed from an arm depends on the amount of resource allocated, and hence, the loss can be censored. We consider a threshold-based model where loss from an arm is observed when allocated resource is below a threshold. The goal is to assign a given resource to arms such that total expected loss is minimized. We considered two variants of the problem, depending on whether or not the thresholds are the same across the arms. For the variant where thresholds are the same across the arms, we established that it is equivalent to the Multiple-Play Multi-Armed Bandit problem. For the second variant where threshold can depend on the arm, we established that it is equivalent to a more general Combinatorial Semi-Bandit problem. Exploiting these equivalences, we developed algorithms that enjoy optimal performance guarantees.

We decoupled the problem of threshold and mean loss estimation. It would be interesting to explore if this can be done jointly, leading to better performance guarantees. Another new extension of work is to relax the assumptions that mean losses are strictly positive, and time horizon $T$ is known.
Acknowledgments

Arun Verma would like to thank travel support from Google and NeurIPS. Manjesh K. Hanawal would like to thank the support from INSPIRE faculty fellowships from DST, Government of India, SEED grant (16IRCCSG010) from IIT Bombay, and Early Career Research (ECR) Award from SERB. Initial discussions of this work were done when Raman Sankaran was at Conduent Labs India.

References

Kevin M Curtin, Karen Hayslett-McCall, and Fang Qiu. Determining optimal police patrol areas with maximal covering and backup covering location models. *Networks and Spatial Economics*, 10(1):125–145, 2010.

Nicole Adler, Alfred Shalom Hakker, Jonathan Kornbluth, Tal Raviv, and Mali Sher. Location-allocation models for traffic police patrol vehicles on an interurban network. *Annals of Operations Research*, 221(1):9–31, 2014.

Ariel Rosenfeld and Sarit Kraus. When security games hit traffic: Optimal traffic enforcement under one sided uncertainty. In *IJCAI*, pages 3814–3822, 2017.

Thanh H Nguyen, Arunesh Sinha, Shahrzad Gholami, Andrew Plumptre, Lucas Joppa, Milind Tambe, Margaret Driciru, Fred Wanyama, Aggrey Rwetsiba, Rob Critchlow, et al. Capture: A new predictive anti-poaching tool for wildlife protection. In *Proceedings of the 2016 International Conference on Autonomous Agents & Multiagent Systems*, pages 767–775, 2016.

Shahrzad Gholami, Sara Mc Carthy, Bistra Dilkina, Andrew Plumptre, Milind Tambe, Margaret Driciru, Fred Wanyama, Aggrey Rwetsiba, Mustapha Nsubaga, Joshua Mabonga, et al. Adversary models account for imperfect crime data: Forecasting and planning against real-world poachers. In *Proceedings of the 17th International Conference on Autonomous Agents and MultiAgent Systems*, pages 823–831, 2018.

Jacob D Abernethy, Kareem Amin, and Ruihao Zhu. Threshold bandits, with and without censored feedback. In *Advances In Neural Information Processing Systems*, pages 4889–4897, 2016.

Tor Lattimore, Koby Crammer, and Csaba Szepesvári. Optimal resource allocation with semi-bandit feedback. In *Proceedings of the Thirtieth Conference on Uncertainty in Artificial Intelligence*, pages 477–486. AUAI Press, 2014.

Chao Zhang, Victor Bucarey, Ayan Mukhopadhyay, Arunesh Sinha, Yundi Qian, Yevgeniy Vorobyechik, and Milind Tambe. Using abstractions to solve opportunist crime security games at scale. In *Proceedings of the 2016 International Conference on Autonomous Agents & Multiagent Systems*, pages 196–204, 2016.

Arunesh Sinha, Fei Fang, Bo An, Christopher Kiekintveld, and Milind Tambe. Stackelberg security games: Looking beyond a decade of success. In *IJCAI*, pages 5494–5501, 2018.

Chao Zhang, Arunesh Sinha, and Milind Tambe. Keeping pace with criminals: Designing patrol allocation against adaptive opportunistic criminals. In *Proceedings of the 2015 international conference on Autonomous agents and multiagent systems*, pages 1351–1359, 2015.

Ashwinkumar Badanidiyuru, Robert Kleinberg, and Aleksandrs Slivkins. Bandits with knapsacks. *Journal of the ACM (JACM)*, 65(3):13, 2018.

Lalit Jain and Kevin Jamieson. Firing bandits: Optimizing crowdfunding. In *International Conference on Machine Learning*, pages 2211–2219, 2018.

Tor Lattimore, Koby Crammer, and Csaba Szepesvári. Linear multi-resource allocation with semi-bandit feedback. In *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, pages 964–972, 2015.

Yuval Dagan and Crammer Koby, A better resource allocation algorithm with semi-bandit feedback. In *Proceedings of Algorithmic Learning Theory*, pages 268–320, 2018.
Nicolo Cesa-Bianchi and Gábor Lugosi. Combinatorial bandits. Journal of Computer and System Sciences, 78(5):1404–1422, 2012.

Wei Chen, Yajun Wang, and Yang Yuan. Combinatorial multi-armed bandit: General framework and applications. In International Conference on Machine Learning, pages 151–159, 2013.

Arun Rajkumar and Shivani Agarwal. Online decision-making in general combinatorial spaces. In Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems, pages 3482–3490, 2014.

Richard Combes, Mohammad Sadegh Talebi Mazraeh Shahi, Alexandre Proutiere, et al. Combinatorial bandits revisited. In Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems, pages 2116–2124, 2015.

Wei Chen, Wei Hu, Fu Li, Jian Li, Yu Liu, and Pinyan Lu. Combinatorial multi-armed bandit with general reward functions. In Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems, pages 1659–1667, 2016.

Siwei Wang and Wei Chen. Thompson sampling for combinatorial semi-bandits. In International Conference on Machine Learning, pages 5101–5109, 2018.

Junpei Komiyama, Junya Honda, and Hiroshi Nakagawa. Optimal regret analysis of thompson sampling in stochastic multi-armed bandit problem with multiple plays. In International Conference on Machine Learning, pages 1152–1161, 2015.

Nicolo Cesa-Bianchi, Gábor Lugosi, and Gilles Stoltz. Regret minimization under partial monitoring. Mathematics of Operations Research, 31(3):562–580, 2006.

Gábor Bartók and Csaba Szepesvári. Partial monitoring with side information. In International Conference on Algorithmic Learning Theory, pages 305–319. Springer, 2012.

Gábor Bartók, Dean P Foster, Dávid Pál, Alexander Rakhlin, and Csaba Szepesvári. Partial monitoring—classification, regret bounds, and algorithms. Mathematics of Operations Research, 39(4):967–997, 2014.

V. Anantharam, P. Varaiya, and J. Walrand. Asymptotically efficient allocation rules for the multiarmed bandit problem with multiple plays- part I. IEEE Transactions on Automatic Control, 32(11):968–976, 1987.

Mhand Hifi and Hedi Mhalla. Sensitivity analysis to perturbations of the weight of a subset of items: The knapsack case study. Discrete Optimization, 10(4):320–330, 2013.
Supplementary Material for ‘Censored Semi-Bandits: A Framework for Resource Allocation with Censored Feedback’

A Proofs related to Section 3

A.1 Proof of Lemma 1

**Lemma 1.** For any $\theta_c \in (0, 1]$ and $Q \geq \theta_c$, let $M = \min\{|Q/\theta_c|, K\}$ and $\hat{\theta}_c = Q/M$. Then $\theta_c$ and $\hat{\theta}_c$ are allocation equivalent. Further, $\hat{\theta}_c \in \Theta$ where $\Theta = \{Q/K, Q/(K-1), \ldots, \min\{1, Q\}\}$.

**Proof.** The case $|Q/\theta_c| \geq K$ is trivial. We consider the case $|Q/\theta_c| < K$. By definition $M = \min\{|Q/\theta_c|, K\}$. We have $M \leq Q/\theta_c$ and $\theta_c \leq Q/M \leq \hat{\theta}_c$. Hence $\hat{\theta}_c \geq \theta_c$. Therefore $\hat{\theta}_c$ fraction of resource allocation at a location has same reduction in the mean loss as $\theta_c$. Further, in both the instances $(\mu, \theta_c, Q)$ and $(\mu, \hat{\theta}_c, Q)$ the optimal allocations incur no loss from the bottom-M and the same amount of loss from the top $K-M$ arms. Hence the mean loss reduction for both the instances is same. This completes the proof of first part. As $M \in \{1, \ldots, K\}$ and $\hat{\theta}_c \leq 1$, the possible value of $\theta_c$ is only one of element in the set $\Theta = \{Q/K, Q/(K-1), \ldots, \min\{1, Q\}\}$. \hfill $\square$

A.2 Proof of Lemma 2

**Lemma 2.** Let $(\mu, \theta_c, Q)$ be an CSB instance such that $\mu_1 \geq \epsilon > 0$. Then with probability at least $1 - \delta$, the number of rounds needed by threshold estimation phase of CSB-ST to find the allocation equivalent for threshold $\theta_c$ is bounded as

$$T_{\theta_c} \leq \frac{\log\log_2(|\Theta|)/\delta}{\max\{1, |Q|\} \log(1/(1-\epsilon)) \log_2(|\Theta|)}.$$ 

**Proof.** When $\hat{\theta}_c < \theta_c$, it can happen that no loss is observed for $W$ consecutive rounds that leads to incorrect estimation of $\theta_c$. We want to set $W$ such a way that the probability of occurring of such event is small. This probability is bounded as follows:

$$P\left\{\text{No loss is observed on } Q/\hat{\theta}_c \text{ arms for } W \text{ consecutive rounds at } \hat{\theta}_c < \theta_c \text{ (underestimate)}\right\}$$

$$= \prod_{i \leq Q/\hat{\theta}_c} (1 - \mu_i)^W \quad \text{(as } (1 - \mu_i) \text{ is the probability of not observing loss at location } i\text{)}$$

$$\leq \prod_{i \leq M} (1 - \mu_i)^W \quad \text{(as } \hat{\theta}_c < \theta_c \implies M \leq Q/\hat{\theta}_c\text{)}$$

$$\leq \prod_{i \leq M} (1 - \epsilon)^W = (1 - \epsilon)^{MW} \leq (1 - \epsilon)^{QW} \quad \text{(as } M \geq Q\text{)}$$

Since we are using binary search, the algorithm goes through at most $\log_2(|\Theta|)$ underestimates of $\theta_c$. Let $I$ denote the indices of these underestimates in $\Theta$

$$P\left\{\text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds at any underestimate of } \theta_c\right\}$$

$$\leq \sum_{i \in I} P\left\{\text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds at the underestimate } \Theta(i)\right\}$$

$$\leq (1 - \epsilon)^{QW} \log_2(|\Theta|)$$

We want to bound the probability of making mistake by $\delta$. We get,

$$(1 - \epsilon)^{QW} \log_2(|\Theta|) \leq \delta \implies (1 - \epsilon)^{QW} \leq \delta/\log_2(|\Theta|)$$

12
We set \( S \) where \( \log \left( \frac{1}{1 - \epsilon} \right) \geq \log(\log_2(\theta)/\delta) \) \( \implies W \geq \frac{\log(\log_2(\theta)/\delta)}{Q \log \left( \frac{1}{1 - \epsilon} \right)} \).

We set
\[
W = \frac{\log(\log_2(\theta)/\delta)}{Q \log \left( \frac{1}{1 - \epsilon} \right)}
\]

Hence, the minimum rounds needed to find \( \hat{\theta}_e \) with probability at least \( 1 - \delta \) is \( W \log_2(\theta) \).

\[\text{A.3 Proof of Proposition 1}\]

**Proposition 1.** Let \( P := (\mu, \theta_e, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}}^c \) with known \( \theta_e \) then the regret of \( \pi \) on \( P \) is same as the regret of \( \pi' \) on \( f(P) \). Similarly, let \( P' := (\mu, m) \in \mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}} \), then regret of a policy \( \beta \) on \( P' \) is same as the regret of \( \beta' \) on \( f^{-1}(P') \). Thus the set \( \mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}} \) with a known \( \theta_e \) is ‘regret equivalent’ to \( \mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}} \), i.e., \( \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}}^c) = \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}}) \).

**Proof.** Let \( \pi \) be a policy on \( P := (\mu, \theta_c, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}}^c \). The regret of policy \( \pi \) on \( P \) is given by
\[
\mathcal{R}_T(\pi, P) = \sum_{t=1}^{T} \left( \sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_{t,i} < \theta_e\}} - \sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_{t,i} < \theta_e\}} \right),
\]
where \( a^* \) is the optimal allocation for \( P \). Consider \( f(P) = (\mu, m) \in \mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}} \) where \( \mu \) is the same as in \( P \) and \( m = K - M \), where \( M = \min\{\{Q/\theta_e\}, K\} \). The regret of policy \( \pi' \) on \( f(P) \) is given by
\[
\mathcal{R}_T(\pi', f(P)) = \sum_{t=1}^{T} \left( \sum_{i \in S_t} \mu_i - \sum_{i=1}^{K-M} \mu_i \right),
\]
where \( S_t \) is the superarm played in round \( t \). Recall the ordering \( \mu_1 \leq \mu_2 \leq \ldots \leq \mu_K \). It is clear that \( \sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_{t,i} < \theta_e\}} = \sum_{i=1}^{K-M} \mu_i \). Let \( L_t \) be the set of arms where no resources are allocated by \( \pi \) in round \( t \). Since, loss only incurred from arms in the set \( L_t \), we have \( \sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_{t,i} < \theta_e\}} = \sum_{i \in L_t} \mu_i \). From the definition of \( \pi' \), notice that in round \( t \), \( \pi' \) selects superarm \( S_t = L_t \), i.e., set of arms returned by \( \pi \) for which no resource is applied. Hence \( \sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_{t,i} < \theta_e\}} = \sum_{i \in S_t} \mu_i \). This establishes the regret of \( \pi \) on \( P \) is same as regret of \( \pi' \) on \( f(P) \) and we get \( \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}}) \leq \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}}^c) \). Similarly, we can establish the other direction of the proposition and get \( \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}}^c) \leq \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}}) \). Thus we conclude \( \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{CSB}}^c) = \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_{\text{MP}}) \).

\[\text{A.4 Proof of Theorem 1}\]

Let \( M, \nabla_m \), and \( W \) be defined as in Section 3.2.1. We use the following results to prove the theorem.

**Theorem 3.** Let \( \hat{\theta}_e \) be allocation equivalent to \( \theta_c \) for instance \( (\mu, \theta_c, Q) \). Then, the expected regret of the regret minimization phase of \( \text{CSB-ST} \) for \( T \) rounds is upper bound as
\[
\mathbb{E} [\mathcal{R}_T] \leq O \left[ (\log T)^{2/3} \right] + \sum_{i \in [K] \setminus [K-M]} \frac{(\mu_i - \mu_{K-M}) \log T}{d(\mu_{K-M}, \mu_i)}.
\]

**Proof.** As \( \hat{\theta}_e \) be allocation equivalent to \( \theta_c \), the instances \( (\mu, \theta_c, Q) \) and \( (\mu, \hat{\theta}_e, Q) \) have same minimum loss. Also, by the equivalence established is Proposition 1, the regret minimization phase of \( \text{CSB-ST} \) is solving a MP-MAB instance. Then we can directly apply Theorem 1 of Komiyama et al. (2015) to obtain the regret bounds by setting \( k = K - M \) and noting that we are in the loss setting and a mistake happens when a arm \( i \in [K] \setminus [K-M] \) is in selected superarm.
**Theorem 4.** With probability at least $1 - \delta$, the expected cumulative regret of CSB-ST is upper bounded as

$$\mathbb{E}[R_T] \leq W \log_2 (|\Theta|) \nabla_m + O \left( (\log T)^{2/3} \right) + \sum_{i \in [K \setminus [K-M]]} \frac{(\mu_i - \mu_{K-M}) \log T}{d(\mu_{K-M}, \mu_i)}.$$

**Proof.** CSB-ST has two phases: threshold estimation and loss minimization. Threshold estimation runs for at most $W \log_2 (|\Theta|)$ rounds and returns an allocation equivalent threshold with probability at least $1 - \delta$. The maximum regret incurred in this phase is $W \log_2 (|\Theta|) \nabla_m$. Given that the threshold estimated in the threshold estimation phase is correct, the regret incurred in the regret minimization phase is given by Theorem 3. Thus the expected regret of CSB-ST is given by the sum of regret incurred in these two phases and holds with probability at least $1 - \delta$. \hfill \Box

**Theorem 1.** Let $\mu_1 \geq \epsilon > 0$, $W_T = \log(T \log_2(|\Theta|)) / \max\{1, |Q|\} \log(1/(1-\epsilon))$, $\mu_{K-M} < \mu_{K-M+1}$, and $T > W_T \log_2(|\Theta|)$. Set $\delta = 1/T$ in CSB-ST. Then the regret of CSB-ST is upper bound as

$$\mathbb{E}[R_T] \leq W_T \log_2 (|\Theta|) \nabla_m + O \left( (\log T)^{2/3} \right) + \sum_{i \in [K \setminus [K-M]]} \frac{(\mu_i - \mu_{K-M}) \log T}{d(\mu_{K-M}, \mu_i)}.$$

**Proof.** The bound follows from Theorem 4 by setting $\delta = 1/T$ and unconditioning the expected regret obtained in the regret minimization phase of CSB-ST. \hfill \Box

### B Proofs related to Section 4

#### B.1 Proof of Proposition 2

**Proposition 2.** Let $P = (\mu, \theta, Q) \in \mathcal{P}_{CSB}$. Then the optimal allocation for $P$ is a solution of $KP(\mu, \theta, Q)$ problem.

**Proof.** Assigning $\theta_i$ fraction of resources to the arm $i$ reduces the total mean loss by amount $\mu_i$. Our goal is to allocate resources such that total mean loss is minimize i.e., $\min_{a \in A_Q} \sum_{i \in [K]} \mu_i 1_{a \leq \theta_i}$. Note that the maximization version of same optimization problem is $\max_{a \in A_Q} \sum_{i \in [K]} \mu_i 1_{a > \theta_i}$ which is same as solving a 0-1 knapsack with capacity $Q$ where item $i$ has value $\mu_i$ and weight $\theta_i$. \hfill \Box

#### B.2 Proof of Lemma 3

**Lemma 3.** Let $\gamma > 0$ and $\forall i \in [K]: \theta_i \in [\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma]$. Then for any $\mu \in [0, 1]^K$ and $Q$, the $\theta$ and $\hat{\theta}$ are allocation equivalent.

**Proof.** Let $L^* = \{i : a_i^* < \theta_i\}$ and $r = Q - \sum_{i : a_i^* \geq \theta_i} \theta_i$. If resource $r$ is allocated to any arm $i \in L^*$, minimum value of mean loss will not change as $r < \min_{i \in L^*} \theta_i$. If we can allocate $\gamma = r/K$ fraction of $r$ to each arm $i \in K$, the minimum mean loss still remains same. If estimated threshold of every arm $i \in K$ lies in $[\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma]$ then using Theorem 3.2 of Hifi and Mhalla (2013), $KP(\mu, \theta, Q)$ and $KP(\mu, \hat{\theta}, Q)$ has the same optimal solution because of having the same mean loss for both the problem instances. \hfill \Box

#### B.3 Proof of Lemma 4

**Lemma 4.** Let $(\mu, \theta, Q)$ be an instance of CSB such that $\gamma > 0$ and $\mu_1 \geq \epsilon > 0$. Then with probability at least $1 - \delta$, the number of rounds needed by threshold estimation phase of CSB-DT to find the allocation equivalent for threshold vector $\theta$ is bounded as

$$T_{\theta_1} \leq K \log(K \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma])/\delta) \max\{1, [Q]\} \log(1/(1-\epsilon)) \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma]).$$
Proof. For any arm $i \in [K]$, we want $\hat{\theta}_i \in [\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma]$. As $\theta_i \in (0, 1]$, we can divide interval $[0, 1]$ into a discrete set $\Theta = \{0, \gamma, 2\gamma, \ldots, 1\}$ and note that $|\Theta| = \lceil 1 + 1/\gamma \rceil$. As search space is reduced by half in each change of $\hat{\theta}_i$, the maximum change in $\hat{\theta}_i$ is upper bounded by $\log_2 |\Theta|$ to make sure that $\hat{\theta}_i \in [\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma]$. When $\hat{\theta}_i$ is underestimated and no loss is observed for consecutive $W$ rounds, a mistake is happened by assuming that current allocation is overestimated. We set $W$ such that the probability of estimating wrong $\hat{\theta}_i$ is small and bounded as follows:

$$P\left\{ \text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds when } \hat{\theta}_i \text{ is underestimated} \right\} = (1 - \mu_i)^W \quad \text{(as } (1 - \mu_i) \text{ is the probability of not observing loss at arm } i)$$

$$\leq (1 - \epsilon)^W \quad \text{(since } \forall i \in [K] : \mu_i > \epsilon)$$

Since we are doing binary search, the algorithm goes through at most $\log_2(|\Theta|)$ underestimate of $\theta_i$. Let $I$ denote the indices of these underestimate in $\Theta$

$$P\left\{ \text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds when } \hat{\theta}_i \text{ is underestimated} \right\} \leq \sum_{i \in I} P\left\{ \text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds when } \hat{\theta}_i \text{ is underestimated} \right\}$$

$$\leq (1 - \epsilon)^W \log_2(|\Theta|)$$

Next, we will bound the probability of making mistake for any of the arm. That is given by

$$P\left\{ \exists i \in [K], \hat{\theta}_i \in \Theta : \text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds when } \hat{\theta}_i \text{ is underestimated} \right\}$$

$$\leq \sum_{i=1}^{K} P\left\{ \exists \hat{\theta}_i \in \Theta : \text{No loss is observed for consecutive } W \text{ rounds when } \hat{\theta}_i \text{ is underestimated} \right\}$$

$$\leq K(1 - \epsilon)^W \log_2(|\Theta|)$$

We want to bound the above probability of making a mistake by $\delta$ for all arms. We get,

$$K(1 - \epsilon)^W \log_2(|\Theta|) \leq \delta \implies (1 - \epsilon)^W \leq \delta / K \log_2(|\Theta|)$$

Taking log both side, we get

$$W \log(1 - \epsilon) \leq \log(\delta / K \log_2(|\Theta|)) \implies W \log \left(1/(1 - \epsilon)\right) \geq \log(K \log_2(|\Theta|)) / \delta$$

$$\implies W \geq \frac{\log(K \log_2(|\Theta|)) / \delta}{\log \left(1/(1 - \epsilon)\right)}$$

We set

$$W = \frac{\log(K \log_2(|\Theta|)) / \delta}{\log \left(1/(1 - \epsilon)\right)}$$

(6)

Therefore, the minimum rounds needed for an arm $i$ to correctly find $\hat{\theta}_i$ with probability at least $1 - \delta$ is upper bounded by $W \log_2(|\Theta|)$. CSB-DT can simultaneously estimate threshold for at least $\max\{1, |Q|\}$ arms by exploiting the fact that $\hat{\theta}_i \leq 1$. The threshold for $K$ arms needs to be estimate, hence, minimum rounds needed to correctly find all $\hat{\theta}_i \in [\theta_i, \theta_i + \gamma]$ with probability at least $1 - \delta$ is $K W \log_2(|\Theta|) / \max\{1, |Q|\}$. \qed

B.4 Proof of Proposition 3

Equivalence of CSB with different thresholds and Combinatorial Semi-Bandit

In stochastic Combinatorial Semi-Bandits (CoSB), a learner can play a subset from $K$ arms in each round, also known as superarm, and observes the loss from each arm played (Chen et al., 2013, 2016; Wang and Chen, 2018). The size of superarm can vary, and the mean loss of a superarm only depends on the means of its constituent arms. The goal of the learner is to select a superarm that has the smallest loss. A policy in CoSB selects a superarm in each round based on the past information. The performance of a policy is measured in terms of regret defined as the difference between cumulative
loss incurred by the policy and that incurred by playing an optimal superarm in each round. Let \((\mu, I) \in [0, 1]^K \times 2^{[K]} \) denote an instance of CoSB where \(\mu\) denote the mean loss vector, and \(I\) denotes the set of superarms. Let \(P_{\text{CSB}}^d \subset P_{\text{CSB}}\) denote the set of CoSB instances with a different threshold for arms. For any \((\mu, \theta, Q) \in P_{\text{CSB}}^d\) with \(K\) arms and known threshold \(\theta\), let \((\mu, I)\) be an instance of CoSB with \(K\) arms and each arm has the same Bernoulli distribution as the corresponding arm in the CSB instance. Let \(P_{\text{CSB}}\) denote set of resulting CoSB problems and \(g : P_{\text{CSB}} \rightarrow P_{\text{CSB}}\) denote the above transformation.

Let \(\pi\) be a policy on \(P_{\text{CSB}}\). \(\pi\) can also be applied on any \((\mu, \theta, Q) \in P_{\text{CSB}}^d\) with known \(\theta\) to decide which set of arms are allocated resource as follows: in round \(t\), let information \((L_1, Y_1, L_2, Y_2, \ldots, L_{t-1}, Y_{t-1})\) collected on an CSB instance, where \(L_i\) is the set of arms where no resource is applied and \(Y_i\) is the samples observed from these arms, is given to \(\pi\) which returns a set \(L_t\). Then all arms other than arms in \(L_t\) are given resource equal to their estimate threshold. Let this policy on \((\mu, \theta, Q) \in P_{\text{CSB}}^d\) is denoted as \(\pi'\). In a similar way a policy \(\beta\) on \(P_{\text{CSB}}\) can be adopted to yield a policy for \(P_{\text{CSB}}\) as follows: in round \(t\), the information \((S_1, Y_1, S_2, Y_2, \ldots, S_{t-1}, Y_{t-1})\), where \(S_t\) is the superarm played in round \(s\) and \(Y_t\) is the associated loss observed from each arm in \(S_t\), collected on an CSB instance is given to \(\pi\). Then \(\pi\) returns a set \(S_t\) where no resources has to applied. The superarm corresponding to \(S_t\) is then played. Let this policy on \(P_{\text{CSB}}\) be denote as \(\beta'\). Note that when \(\theta\) is known, the mapping is invertible.

**Proposition 3.** The CSB problem with known threshold vector \(\theta\) is regret equivalent to a combinatorial semi-bandits where Oracle uses \(K(P(\mu, \theta, Q))\) to identify the optimal subset of arms.

**Proof.** Let \(\pi\) be a policy on \(P := (\mu, \theta, Q) \in P_{\text{CSB}}^d\). The regret of policy \(\pi\) on \(P\) is given by

\[
\mathcal{R}_T(\pi, P) = \sum_{t=1}^T \left(\sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_t\}} - \sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i^* < \theta_t\}}\right),
\]

where \(a^*\) is the optimal allocation for \(P\), \(g(P) = (\mu, I) \in P_{\text{CSB}}\) where \(\mu\) is the same as in \(P\) and \(I\) contains all superarms (set of arms) for which resource allocation is feasible. The regret of policy \(\pi'\) on \(g(P)\) is given by

\[
\mathcal{R}_T(\pi', g(P)) = \sum_{t=1}^T \left(l(S_t, \mu) - l(S^*, \mu)\right)
\]

where \(S_t\) is the superarm played in round \(t\), \(S^*\) is optimal superarm, and \(l\) returns mean loss. Note that outcomes of \(l(S, \mu)\) only depends on mean loss of constituents arms of the superarm \(S\). In our setting, \(l(S, \mu) = \sum_{i \in S} \mu_i\) where \(S = \{i : a_i < \theta_t\}\) for allocation \(a \in A_Q\). It is clear that \(\sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_t\}} = l(S^*, \mu)\). Let \(L_t\) be the set of arms where no resources is allocated by \(\pi\) in round \(t\). Since, loss only incurred from arms in the set \(L_t\), we have \(\sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i < \theta_t\}} = \sum_{i \in L_t} \mu_i\). From the definition of \(\pi'\), notice that in round \(t\), \(\pi'\) selects superarm \(S_t = L_t\), i.e., set of arms returned by \(\pi\) for which no resources are applied. Hence \(\sum_{i=1}^K \mu_i \mathbb{1}_{\{a_i^* < \theta_t\}} = \sum_{i \in S_t} \mu_i\). This establishes the regret of \(\pi\) on \(P\) is same as regret of \(\pi'\) on \(g(P)\) and we get \(\mathcal{R}(P_{\text{CSB}}) \leq \mathcal{R}(P_{\text{CSB}}^d)\). Similarly, we can establish the other direction of the proposition and get \(\mathcal{R}(P_{\text{CSB}}^d) \leq \mathcal{R}(P_{\text{CSB}})\). Thus we conclude \(\mathcal{R}(P_{\text{CSB}}^d) = \mathcal{R}(P_{\text{CSB}})\).

**B.5 Proof of Theorem 2**

Let \(\nabla_a\) and \(\nabla_m\) be defined as in Section 3.2.1. Let \(S_a = \{i : a_i < \theta_t\}\) for a feasible allocation \(a\), \(k^* = |S_a^*|\), and \(W\) be same as in Section 4.1.1. Note that we will never be able to sample a \(\mu_i(t)\) to be precisely the true value \(\mu_i\) using Beta distribution. We need to consider the \(\eta\)-neighborhood of \(\mu_i\), and such \(\eta\) term is common in the analysis of most Thompson Sampling based algorithms (see Wang and Chen (2018) for more details). We need the following results to prove the theorem.

**Theorem 5.** Let \(\hat{\theta}\) be allocation equivalent to \(\theta\) for instance \((\mu, \theta, Q)\). Then, the expected regret of the regret minimization phase of CSB-DT in \(T\) rounds is upper bound as

\[
\left(\sum_{i \in [K]} \max_{S_a, a \in A} \frac{8|S_a| \log T}{\nabla_a - 2|k^*+2| \eta^2} \right) + \left(\frac{K(K-N)^2}{N^2} + \frac{8\eta}{\eta^2} \left(\frac{4}{\eta^2} + 1\right)^k \log \frac{K}{\eta^2} + 3K\right) \nabla_m\text{ for any }\eta\text{ such that }\forall a \in A_Q, \nabla_a > 2(k^* + 2)\eta\text{ and }\alpha_1\text{ is a problem independent constant.} \]
Proof. Once the allocation equivalent to $\theta$ is known, the regret minimization problem is equivalent to solving a combinatorial semi-bandit problem (from Proposition 3). The proof follows by verifying Assumptions 1 – 3 in (Wang and Chen, 2018) for the combinatorial semi-bandit problem and applying their regret bounds. Assumption 1 states that the mean of a superarm depends only on the means of its constituents arms (Assumption 1) and distributions of the arms are independent (Assumptions 3). It is clear that both of these assumptions hold for our case. We next proceed to verify Assumption 2. For fix allocation $a \in A_Q$, the mean loss incurred from loss vector $\mu$ is given by $l(S, \mu) = \sum_{i \in S} \mu_i$ where $S = \{i : a_i < \theta\}$. For any loss vectors $\mu$ and $\mu'$, we have

$$l(S, \mu) - l(S, \mu') = \sum_{i \in S} (\mu_i - \mu'_i)$$

$$= \sum_{k=1}^{K} \mathbb{I}\{a_i < \theta\} (\mu_i - \mu'_i) = \left(\sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu_i \mathbb{I}\{a_i < \theta\}\right) - \left(\sum_{i=1}^{K} \mu'_i \mathbb{I}\{a_i < \theta\}\right)$$

$$\leq \sum_{i=1}^{K} (\mu_i - \mu'_i) \leq \sum_{i=1}^{K} |\mu_i - \mu'_i| = B \|\mu - \mu'\|_1$$

where $B = 1$. Also, note that in the regret minimization phase, the allocation to each arm remains the same in each round ($\hat{\theta}_i$ is given to each arm $i \in [K] \setminus L_t$). Thus we are solving a combinatorial semi-bandit with parameter $B = 1$ in the regret minimization phase. By applying Theorem 1 in Wang and Chen (2018), we get the desired bounds.

Theorem 6. With probability at least $1 - \delta$, the expected cumulative regret of CSB-DT is upper bound as $E[R_T] \leq \left(\frac{KW \log_2 ([1 + 1/\gamma])}{\max\{1, Q\}}\right) \nabla_m + \left(\sum_{i \in [K]} \max_{s_{a_i} \in S_a} \frac{8|S_a| \log T}{\nabla_a - 2(k^* + 2)\eta}\right) + \left(\frac{K(K - N)^2}{\eta^2} + \frac{8\alpha_1}{\eta^2} \left(\frac{4}{\eta^2} + 1\right)^{k^*} \log \frac{k^*}{\eta^2} + 3K\right) \nabla_m.$

Proof. The threshold estimation phase runs for at most $KW \log_2 ([1 + 1/\gamma]) / \max\{1, Q\}$ rounds and finds an allocation equivalent threshold with probability $1 - \delta$. The regret incurred by this phase is $(KW \log_2 ([1 + 1/\gamma]) / \max\{1, Q\}) \nabla_m$ which form the first part of the bounds. Once an allocation equivalent threshold is found, the upper bound on expected regret incurred in the regret minimization phase is given by Theorem 5. Thus the regret of CSB-DT is given by sum of these two quantities holds with probability at least $(1 - \delta)$.

Theorem 2. Let $(\mu, \theta, Q) \in P_{CSB}$ such that $\gamma > 0$, $\mu_1 \geq \epsilon$, and $T > W_T \log_2 ([1 + 1/\gamma])$. Set $\delta = 1/T$ in CSB-DT. Then the expected regret of CSB-DT is upper bound as $E[R_T] \leq \left(\frac{KW_T \log_2 ([1 + 1/\gamma])}{\max\{1, Q\}}\right) \nabla_m + \left(\sum_{i \in [K]} \max_{s_{a_i} \in S_a} \frac{8|S_a| \log T}{\nabla_a - 2(k^* + 2)\eta}\right) + \left(\frac{K(K - Q)^2}{\eta^2} + \frac{8\alpha_1}{\eta^2} \left(\frac{4}{\eta^2} + 1\right)^{k^*} \log \frac{k^*}{\eta^2} + 3K\right) \nabla_m$

for any $\eta$ such that $\forall a \in A_Q, \nabla_a > 2(k^* + 2)\eta$ and a problem independent constant $\alpha_1$.

Proof. The bound follows from Theorem 6 by setting $\delta = 1/T$ and unconditioning the expected regret obtained in the regret minimization phase of CSB-DT.

C Leftover details from Section 5

C.1 Algorithm: CSB-DT-UCB

In our experiments, we used an UCB index-based algorithm named CSB-DT-UCB for comparing cumulative regret with Thompson Sampling based algorithm CSB-DT. CSB-DT-UCB works as follows: it keeps track of number of losses ($S_i$) and number of observations ($N_i$) for each arm $i \in [K]$. At round $t$, it computes lower bound of mean losses of all arms (Line 23). We use the lower bound due to our loss setting. The remaining part of CSB-DT-UCB is same as CSB-DT.
CSB-DT-UCB UCB based Algorithm for solving the CSB problem with Different Threshold

Input: $K, Q, \delta, \epsilon, \gamma$

\begin{algorithm}
\textbf{\textbackslash Threshold Estimation Phase \textbackslash}
1: Initialize $\forall i \in [K]: \theta_{i, 1} = 0, \theta_{u, i} = 1, \theta_{g, i} = 0, C_i = 0.$
2: Set $T_{\theta_a} = 0, W = \log(K \log_2([1 + 1/\gamma]) / \delta) / \log(1/(1 - \epsilon))$
3: $\forall i \in [[Q]]: \text{allocate } \theta_i = 0.5 \text{ resource. } \forall j \in [[Q] + 1, K]: \text{allocate } \hat{\theta}_j = \frac{Q - [Q]}{K - [Q]} \text{ resources}$
4: while $\theta_{g, i} = 0$ for any $i \in [K]$ do
5: \hspace{1em} for $i = 1, \ldots, K$ do
6: \hspace{2em} if loss observe for arm $i$ with $\theta_{g, i} = 0$ and $\theta_{l, i} < \hat{\theta}_i$ then
7: \hspace{3em} Set $\hat{\theta}_i = \hat{\theta}_i, \theta_i = (\theta_{u, i} + \theta_{l, i})/2, C_i = 0.$ If available allocate resource $\hat{\theta}_i$
8: \hspace{2em} else
9: \hspace{3em} If allocated resources is $\hat{\theta}_i$ then reset $C_i = C_i + 1$
10: \hspace{3em} if $C_i = W$ and $\theta_{g, i} = 0$ then
11: \hspace{4em} Set $\theta_{u, i} = \hat{\theta}_i, \theta_i = (\theta_{u, i} + \theta_{l, i})/2, C_i = 0.$ If available allocate resource $\hat{\theta}_i$
12: \hspace{4em} if $\theta_{u, i} - \theta_{l, i} \leq \gamma$ then set $\theta_{g, i} = 1$ and $\hat{\theta}_i = \theta_{u, i}$
13: \hspace{2em} end if
14: \hspace{1em} end if
15: \hspace{1em} end for
16: while free resources are available do
17: \hspace{1em} Allocate $\hat{\theta}_i$ resources to a new randomly chosen arm $i$ from the arms having $\theta_{g, i} = 1$
18: \hspace{1em} end while
19: $T_{\theta_j} = T_{\theta_a} + 1$
20: end while

\textbf{\textbackslash Regret Minimization Phase \textbackslash}
21: $\forall i \in [K]: S_i = 0, N_i = 1$
22: for $t = T_{\theta_a} + 1, T_{\theta_a} + 2, \ldots, T$ do
23: \hspace{1em} $\forall i \in [K]: \hat{\mu}_i(t) \leftarrow \max \left\{ \frac{S_i}{N_i} - \sqrt{\frac{1.5 \log(t)}{N_i}}, 0 \right\}$
24: \hspace{1em} $L_t \leftarrow \text{Oracle}(KP(\hat{\mu}(t), \theta, Q))$
25: \hspace{1em} $\forall i \in L_t: \text{allocate no resource to arm } i. \forall j \in K \setminus L_t: \text{allocate } \hat{\theta}_j \text{ resources to arm } j$
26: \hspace{1em} $\forall i \in L_t: \text{observe } X_{t, i}. \text{Update } S_i = S_i + X_{t, i} \text{ and } N_i = N_i + 1$
27: \hspace{1em} end for
\end{algorithm}

\subsection{C.2 Computation complexity of 0-1 Knapsack when items have fractional weight and value}

Even though $KP(\mu, \theta, Q)$ is NP-Hard problem; it can be solved by a pseudo-polynomial time algorithm\(^2\) using dynamic programming with the time complexity of $O(KQ)$. But such an algorithm for $KP(\mu, \theta, Q)$, works when the value and weight of items are integers. In case of $\mu_i$ and $\theta_i$ are fractions, they need to convert these to integers with the desired accuracy by multiplying by large value $S$. The time complexity of solving $KP(S\mu, S\theta, SQ)$ is $O(KSQ)$ as a new capacity of Knapsack is $SQ$. Therefore, the time complexity of solving $KP(S\mu, S\theta, SQ)$ in each of the $T$ rounds is $O(TKSQ)$.

Note that the empirical mean losses do not change drastically in consecutive rounds in practice (except initial rounds). As solving 0-1 knapsack is computationally expensive, we can solve it after $N$ rounds. We use $S = 10^4$ and $N = 20$ in our experiments involving different thresholds.

\(^2\)The running time of pseudo-polynomial time algorithm is a polynomial in the numeric value of the input whereas the running time of polynomial-time algorithms is polynomial of the length of the input.