On the Secrecy Capacity of Fading Channels

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***Abstract*— We consider the secure transmission of information over an ergodic fading channel in the presence of an eavesdropper. Our eavesdropper can be viewed as the wireless counterpart of Wyner's wiretapper. The secrecy capacity of such a system is characterized under the assumption of asymptotically long coherence intervals. We analyze the full Channel State Information (CSI) case, where the transmitter has access to the channel gains of the legitimate receiver and eavesdropper, and the main CSI scenario where only the legitimate receiver channel gain is known at the transmitter. In each scenario, the secrecy capacity is obtained along with the optimal power and rate allocation strategies. We then propose a low-complexity on/off power allocation strategy that achieves near-optimal performance with only the main channel CSI. More specifically, this scheme is shown to be asymptotically optimal as the average SNR goes to infinity, and interestingly, is shown to attain the secrecy capacity under the full CSI assumption. Remarkably, our results reveal the positive impact of fading on the secrecy capacity and establish the critical role of rate adaptation, based on the main channel CSI, in facilitating secure communications over slow fading channels.**

I. Introduction

The notion of information-theoretic secrecy was first introduced by Shannon [1]. This strong notion of secrecy does not rely on any assumptions on the computational resources of the eavesdropper. More specifically, perfect information-theoretic secrecy requires that $I(W;Z) = 0$, i.e., the signal Z received by the eavesdropper does not provide any additional information about the transmitted message W. Shannon considered a scenario where both the legitimate receiver and the eavesdropper have direct access to the transmitted signal. Under this model, he proved a negative result implying that the achievability of perfect secrecy requires the entropy of the private key K, used to encrypt the message W, to be larger than or equal to the entropy of the message itself (i.e., $H(K) \geq H(W)$ for perfect secrecy). However, it was later shown by Wyner in [2] that this negative result was a consequence of the over-restrictive model used in [1]. Wyner introduced the wiretap channel which accounts for the difference in the two noise processes, as observed by the destination and wiretapper. In this model, the wiretapper has no computational limitations and is assumed to know the codebook used by the transmitter. Under the assumption that the wiretapper's signal is a degraded version of the destination's signal, Wyner characterized the tradeoff between the information rate to the destination and the level of ignorance at the wiretapper (measured by its equivocation), and showed that it is possible to achieve a non-zero secrecy capacity. This work was later extended to non-degraded channels by Csiszár and Körner [3], where it was shown that the secrecy capacity is non-zero, unless the source-wiretapper channel is less noisy than the source-destination channel (referred as the main channel in the sequel).

More recently, the effect of slow fading on the secrecy capacity was studied in [8], [9]. In these works, it is assumed that the fading is quasi-static which leads to an alternative definition of outage probability, wherein secure communications can be guaranteed only for the fraction of time when the main channel is stronger than the channel seen by the eavesdropper. This performance metric appears to have an operational significance only in delay sensitive applications with full Channel State Information (CSI). The absence of CSI sheds doubt on the operational significance of outage-based secrecy since it limits the ability of the source to know which parts of the message are decoded by the eavesdropper. In this paper, we focus on delay-tolerant applications which allow for the adoption of an ergodic version of the slow fading channel, instead of the outage-based formulation. Quite interestingly, we show in the sequel that, under this model, one can achieve a perfectly secure non-zero rate even when the eavesdropper channel is less noisy than the legitimate channel **on the average**. In particular, our work here characterizes the secrecy capacity of the slow fading channel in the presence of an eavesdropper. Our eavesdropper is the wireless counterpart of Wyner's wiretapper. We first assume that the transmitter knows the CSI of both the legitimate and eavesdropper channels, and derive the optimal power allocation strategy that achieves the secrecy capacity. Next we consider the case where the transmitter only knows the legitimate channel CSI and, again, derive the optimal power allocation strategy. We then propose an on/off power transmission scheme, with variable rate allocation, which approaches the optimal performance for asymptotically large average SNR. Interestingly, this scheme is also shown to attain the secrecy capacity under the full CSI assumption which implies that, at high SNR values, the additional knowledge of the eavesdropper CSI does not yield any gains in terms of the secrecy capacity for slow fading channels. Finally, our theoretical and numerical results are used to argue that rate adaptation plays a more critical role than power control in achieving the secrecy capacity of slow fading channels. This observation contrasts the scenario without secrecy constraints, where transmission strategies with constant rate are able to achieve capacity [4].

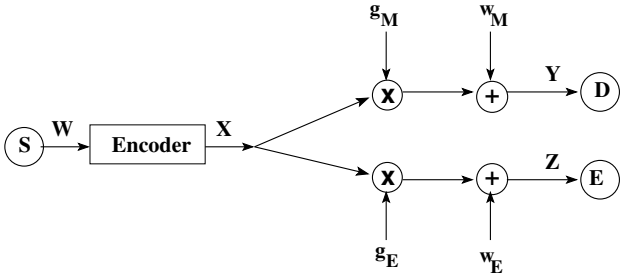

Fig. 1. The Fading Channel with an Eavesdropper

II. System Model

The system model is illustrated in Fig. 1. The source S communicates with a destination D in the presence of an eavesdropper E. During any coherence interval i, the signal received by the destination and the eavesdropper are given by, respectively

$$\begin{aligned} y(i) &= g_M(i)x(i) + w_M(i), \\ z(i) &= g_E(i)x(i) + w_E(i), \end{aligned}$$

where $g_M(i), g_E(i)$ are the channel gains from the source to the legitimate receiver (main channel) and the eavesdropper (eavesdropper channel) respectively, and $w_M(i), w_E(i)$ represent the i.i.d additive Gaussian noise with unit variance at the destination and the eavesdropper respectively. We denote the fading power gains of the main and eavesdropper channels by $h_M(i) = |g_M(i)|^2$ and $h_E(i) = |g_E(i)|^2$ respectively. We assume that both channels experience block fading, where the channel gains remain constant during each coherence interval and change independently from one coherence interval to the next. The fading process is assumed to be ergodic with a bounded continuous distribution. Moreover, the fading coefficients of the destination and the eavesdropper in any coherence interval are assumed to be independent of each other. We further assume that the number of channel uses n_1 within each coherence interval is large enough to allow for invoking random coding arguments. As shown in the sequel, this assumption is instrumental in our achievability proofs.

The source wishes to send a message $W \in \mathcal{W} = \{1, 2, \cdots, M\}$ to the destination. An (M, n) code consists of the following elements: 1) a stochastic encoder $f_n(.)$ at the source that maps the message[1] w to a codeword $x^n \in \mathcal{X}^n$, and 2) a decoding function ϕ: $\mathcal{Y}^n \rightarrow \mathcal{W}$ at the legitimate receiver. The average error probability of an (M, n) code at the legitimate receiver is defined as

$$P_e^n = \sum_{w \in \mathcal{W}} \frac{1}{M} \Pr(\phi(y^n) \neq w | w \text{ was sent}). \quad (1)$$

The equivocation rate R_e at the eavesdropper is defined as the entropy rate of the transmitted message conditioned on the available CSI and the channel outputs at the eavesdropper, i.e.,

$$R_e \triangleq \frac{1}{n} H(W | Z^n, h_M^n, h_E^n) \ , \quad (2)$$

[1]The realizations of the random variables W, X, Y, Z are represented by w, x, y, z respectively in the sequel.

where $h_M^n = \{h_M(1), \cdots, h_M(n)\}$ and $h_E^n = \{h_E(1), \cdots, h_E(n)\}$ denote the channel power gains of the legitimate receiver and the eavesdropper in n coherence intervals, respectively. It indicates the level of ignorance of the transmitted message W at the eavesdropper. In this paper we consider only perfect secrecy which requires the equivocation rate R_e to be equal to the message rate. The perfect secrecy rate R_s is said to be achievable if for any $\epsilon > 0$, there exists a sequence of codes $(2^{nR_s}, n)$ such that for any $n \geq n(\epsilon)$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} P_e^n &\leq \epsilon, \\ R_e &= \frac{1}{n} H(W | Z^n, h_M^n, h_E^n) \geq R_s - \epsilon. \end{aligned}$$

The secrecy capacity C_s is defined as the maximum achievable perfect secrecy rate, i.e.,

$$C_s \triangleq \sup_{P_e^n \leq \epsilon} R_s \ . \quad (3)$$

Throughout the sequel, we assume that the CSI is known at the destination perfectly. Based on the available CSI, the transmitter adapts its transmission power **and rate** to maximize the perfect secrecy rate subject to a long-term average power constraint $\bar{P}$.

III. Full CSI at the Transmitter

Here we assume that at the beginning of each coherence interval, the transmitter knows the channel states of the legitimate receiver and the eavesdropper perfectly. When h_M and h_E are both known at the transmitter, one would expect the optimal scheme to allow for transmission only when $h_M > h_E$, and to adapt the transmitted power according to the instantaneous values of h_M and h_E. The following result formalizes this intuitive argument.

Theorem 1: When the channel gains of both the legitimate receiver and the eavesdropper are known at the transmitter, the secrecy capacity is given by

$$C_s^{(F)} = \max_{P(h_M, h_E)} \int_0^\infty \int_{h_E}^\infty \log\left(\frac{1 + h_M P(h_M, h_E)}{1 + h_E P(h_M, h_E)}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_M \mathrm{d}h_E, \quad (4)$$

$$\text{such that} \qquad \mathbb{E}\{P(h_M, h_E)\} \leq \bar{P}. \quad (5)$$

Proof: A detailed proof of achievability and the converse part is provided in [10]. Here, we outline the scheme used in the achievability part. In this scheme, transmission occurs only when $h_M > h_E$, and uses the power allocation policy $P(h_M, h_E)$ that satisfies the average power constraint (5). Moreover, the codeword rate at each instant is set to be $\log(1 + h_M P(h_M, h_E))$, which varies according to the instantaneous channel gains. The achievable perfect secrecy rate at any instant is then given by $[\log(1 + h_M P(h_M, h_E)) - \log(1 + h_E P(h_M, h_E))]^+$. Averaging over all fading realizations, we get the average achievable perfect secrecy rate as

$$R_s^{(F)} = \mathbb{E}\left\{\left[\log\left(\frac{1 + h_M P(h_M, h_E)}{1 + h_E P(h_M, h_E)}\right)\right]^+\right\}.$$

One can then optimize over all feasible power control policies $P(h_M, h_E)$ to maximize the perfect secrecy rate. ■

We now derive the optimal power allocation policy that achieves the secrecy capacity under the full CSI assumption. It is easy to check that the objective function is concave in $P(h_M, h_E)$, and hence, by using the Lagrangian maximization approach for solving (4), we get the following optimality condition

$$\frac{h_M}{1+h_M P(h_M,h_E)} - \frac{h_E}{1+h_E P(h_M,h_E)} - \lambda \;=\; 0.$$

If for some (h_M, h_E), the value of $P(h_M, h_E)$ obtained from the above equation is negative, then it follows from the concavity of the objective function w.r.t. $P(h_M, h_E)$ that the optimal value of $P(h_M, h_E)$ is 0. Thus the optimal power allocation policy at the transmitter is given by

$$P(h_M,h_E) = \frac{1}{2}\left[\sqrt{\left(\frac{1}{h_E}-\frac{1}{h_M}\right)^2 + \frac{4}{\lambda}\left(\frac{1}{h_E}-\frac{1}{h_M}\right)} - \left(\frac{1}{h_M}+\frac{1}{h_E}\right)\right]^+, \quad (6)$$

where $[x]^+ = \max\{0, x\}$, and the parameter λ is a constant that satisfies the power constraint in (5) with equality. The secrecy capacity is then determined by substituting this optimal power allocation policy for $P(h_M, h_E)$ in (4).

IV. Only Main Channel CSI at the Transmitter

In this section, we assume that at the beginning of each coherence interval, the transmitter only knows the CSI of the main channel (legitimate receiver).

A. Optimal Power Allocation

We first characterize the secrecy capacity under this scenario in the following theorem.

Theorem 2: When only the channel gain of the legitimate receiver is known at the transmitter, the secrecy capacity is given by

$$C_s^{(M)} \;=\; \max_{P(h_M)} \iint \left[\log\left(\frac{1+h_M P(h_M)}{1+h_E P(h_M)}\right)\right]^+ f(h_M)f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_M\mathrm{d}h_E\ , \quad (7)$$

$$\text{such that} \qquad \mathbb{E}\{P(h_M)\} \;\le\; \bar{P}. \quad (8)$$

Proof: A detailed proof of achievability and the converse part is provided in [10]. Here, we outline the scheme used to show achievability. We use the following **variable rate** transmission scheme. During a coherence interval with main channel fading state h_M, the transmitter transmits codewords at rate $\log(1+h_M P(h_M))$ with power $P(h_M)$. This variable rate scheme relies on the assumption of large coherence intervals and ensures that when $h_E > h_M$, the mutual information between the source and the eavesdropper is upper bounded by $\log(1+h_M P(h_M))$. When $h_E \le h_M$, this mutual information will be $\log(1+h_E P(h_M))$. Averaging over all the fading states, the average rate of the main channel is given by

$$\iint \log\left(1+h_M P(h_M)\right) f(h_M)f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_M\mathrm{d}h_E,$$

while the information accumulated at the eavesdropper is

$$\iint \log\left(1+\min\{h_M,h_E\}P(h_M)\right) f(h_M)f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_M\mathrm{d}h_E.$$

Hence for a given power control policy $P(h_M)$, the achievable perfect secrecy rate is given by

$$R_s^{(M)} = \mathbb{E}\left\{\left[\log\left(\frac{1+h_M P(h_M)}{1+h_E P(h_M)}\right)\right]^+\right\}. \quad (9)$$

One can then optimize over all feasible power control policies $P(h_M)$ to maximize the perfect secrecy rate. Finally, we observe that our secure message is **hidden** across different fading states (please refer to the proof in [10] for more details). ■

We now derive the optimal power allocation policy that achieves the secrecy capacity under the main channel CSI assumption. Similar to Theorem 1, the objective function under this case is also concave, and using the Lagrangian maximization approach for solving (7), we get the following optimality condition.

$$\frac{h_M \Pr\left(h_E \le h_M\right)}{1+h_M P(h_M)} - \int_0^{h_M}\left(\frac{h_E}{1+h_E P(h_M)}\right) f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_E \;=\; \lambda,$$

where λ is a constant that satisfies the power constraint in (8) with equality. For any main channel fading state h_M, the optimal transmit power level $P(h_M)$ is determined from the above equation. If the obtained power level turns out to be negative, then the optimal value of $P(h_M)$ is equal to 0. This follows from the concavity of the objective function in (7) w.r.t. $P(h_M)$. The solution to this optimization problem depends on the distributions $f(h_M)$ and $f(h_E)$. In the following, we focus on the Rayleigh fading scenario with $\mathbb{E}\{h_M\} = \overline{\gamma}_M$ and $\mathbb{E}\{h_E\} = \overline{\gamma}_E$ in detail. With Rayleigh fading, the objective function in (7) simplifies to

$$C_s^{(M)} \;=\; \max_{P(h_M)} \int_0^\infty \left[\log\left(1+h_M P(h_M)\right) - \exp\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E P(h_M)}\right)\left(\mathrm{Ei}\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E P(h_M)}\right) - \mathrm{Ei}\left(\frac{h_M}{\overline{\gamma}_E} + \frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E P(h_M)}\right)\right)\right] \frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_M} e^{-(h_M/\overline{\gamma}_M)}\mathrm{d}h_M, \quad (10)$$

where $\mathrm{Ei}(x) = \int_x^\infty (e^{-t}/t)\mathrm{d}t$.

Specializing the optimality conditions to the Rayleigh fading scenario, it can be shown that the power level of the transmitter at any fading state h_M is obtained by solving the equation

$$\lambda \;=\; \left(\frac{\left(1-e^{-(h_M/\overline{\gamma}_E)}\right)h_M}{1+h_M P(h_M)}\right) - \frac{\left(1-e^{-(h_M/\overline{\gamma}_E)}\right)}{P(h_M)} + \frac{\exp\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E P(h_M)}\right)}{\overline{\gamma}_E (P(h_M))^2}\left[\mathrm{Ei}\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E P(h_M)}\right) - \mathrm{Ei}\left(\frac{1+h_M P(h_M)}{\overline{\gamma}_E P(h_M)}\right)\right].$$

If there is no positive solution to this equation for a particular h_M, then we set $P(h_M) = 0$. The secrecy capacity is then determined by substituting this optimal power allocation policy for $P(h_M)$ in (10).

We observe that, unlike the traditional ergodic fading scenario, achieving the optimal performance under a security

constraint relies heavily on using a variable rate transmission strategy. This can be seen by evaluating the performance of a constant rate strategy where a single codeword is interleaved across infinitely many fading realizations. This interleaving will result in the eavesdropper **gaining more information**, than the destination, when its channel is better than the main channel, thereby yielding a perfect secrecy rate that is strictly smaller than that in (9). It is easy to see that the achievable perfect secrecy rate of the constant rate scheme, assuming a Gaussian codebook, is given by

$$\max_{P(h_M)} \iint \log\left(\frac{1+h_M P(h_M)}{1+h_E P(h_M)}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_M \mathrm{d}h_E \ , \quad \text{such that} \quad \mathbb{E}\{P(h_M)\} \leq \bar{P}.$$

Unlike the two previous optimization problems, the objective function in this optimization problem is not a concave function of $P(h_M)$. Using the Lagrangian formulation, we only get the following *necessary* Karush-Kuhn-Tucker (KKT) conditions for the optimal point.

$$\begin{aligned} P(h_M)\left[\lambda - \frac{h_M}{1+h_M P(h_M)} + \int\left(\frac{h_E}{1+h_E P(h_M)}\right) f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_E\right] &= 0, \\ \lambda \geq \frac{h_M}{1+h_M P(h_M)} - \int\left(\frac{h_E}{1+h_E P(h_M)}\right) f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_E, & \\ \mathbb{E}\{P(h_M)\} = \bar{P}. & \end{aligned} \tag{11}$$

B. On/Off Power Control

We now propose a transmission policy wherein the transmitter sends information only when the channel gain of the legitimate receiver h_M exceeds a pre-determined constant threshold $\tau > 0$. Moreover, when $h_M > \tau$, the transmitter always uses the same power level P. However, it is crucial to adapt the rate of transmission instantaneously as $\log(1+h_M P)$ with h_M. It is clear that for an average power constraint $\bar{P}$, the constant power level used for transmission will be

$$P = \frac{\bar{P}}{\Pr(h_M > \tau)} \ .$$

Using a similar argument as in the achievable part of Theorem 2, we get the perfect secrecy rate achieved by the proposed scheme, using Gaussian inputs, as

$$R_s^{(CP)} = \mathbb{E}_{\{h_M>\tau\}}\left\{\left[\log\left(\frac{1+h_M P}{1+h_E P}\right)\right]^+\right\}.$$

Specializing to the Rayleigh fading scenario, we get

$$P = \frac{\bar{P}}{\Pr(h_M > \tau)} = \bar{P} e^{(\tau/\overline{\gamma}_M)} \ ,$$

and the secrecy capacity simplifies to

$$R_s^{(CP)} = \int_\tau^\infty \int_0^{h_M} \left[\log\left(\frac{1+h_M \bar{P} e^{(\tau/\overline{\gamma}_M)}}{1+h_E \bar{P} e^{(\tau/\overline{\gamma}_M)}}\right)\right] \frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_M} e^{-(h_M/\overline{\gamma}_M)} \frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E} e^{-(h_E/\overline{\gamma}_E)} \mathrm{d}h_E \mathrm{d}h_M \ .$$

One can then optimize over the threshold τ to get the maximum achievable perfect secrecy rate.

Finally, we establish the asymptotic optimality of this on/off scheme as the available average transmission power $\bar{P} \to \infty$. For the on/off power allocation policy, we have

$$R_s^{(CP)} = \lim_{\bar{P}\to\infty} \mathbb{E}_{\{h_M>\tau^*\}}\left\{\left[\log\left(\frac{1+h_M P}{1+h_E P}\right)\right]^+\right\}.$$

Taking $\tau^* = 0$, we get $P = \bar{P}$ and

$$\begin{aligned} R_s^{(CP)} &\geq \lim_{\bar{P}\to\infty} \int_0^\infty \int_0^{h_M} \log\left(\frac{(1/\bar{P})+h_M}{(1/\bar{P})+h_E}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_E \mathrm{d}h_M \\ &\overset{(a)}{=} \int_0^\infty \int_0^{h_M} \lim_{\bar{P}\to\infty} \log\left(\frac{(1/\bar{P})+h_M}{(1/\bar{P})+h_E}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_E \mathrm{d}h_M \\ &= \int_0^\infty \int_0^{h_M} \log\left(\frac{h_M}{h_E}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_E \mathrm{d}h_M \\ &= \mathbb{E}_{\{h_M>h_E\}}\left\{\log\left(\frac{h_M}{h_E}\right)\right\}, \end{aligned} \tag{12}$$

where (a) follows from the Dominated Convergence Theorem, since

$$\left|\log\left(\frac{(1/\bar{P})+h_M}{(1/\bar{P})+h_E}\right)\right| \leq \left|\log\left(\frac{h_M}{h_E}\right)\right|, \forall \bar{P} \text{ when } h_M > h_E,$$

and $$\int_0^\infty \int_0^{h_M} \log\left(\frac{h_M}{h_E}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_E \mathrm{d}h_M < \infty,$$

since $\mathbb{E}\{h_M\} < \infty$, $\left|\int_0^1 \log x \ \mathrm{d}x\right| = 1 < \infty$ and $f(h_M), f(h_E)$ are continuous and bounded.

Now under the full CSI assumption, we have

$$\begin{aligned} C_s^{(F)} &= \mathbb{E}_{\{h_M>h_E\}}\left\{\log\left(\frac{\frac{1}{P(h_M,h_E)}+h_M}{\frac{1}{P(h_M,h_E)}+h_E}\right)\right\} \\ &\leq \mathbb{E}_{\{h_M>h_E\}}\left\{\log\left(\frac{h_M}{h_E}\right)\right\}. \end{aligned} \tag{13}$$

From (12) and (13), it is clear that the proposed on/off power allocation policy that uses only the main channel CSI achieves the secrecy capacity under the full CSI assumption as $\bar{P} \to \infty$. Thus the absence of eavesdropper CSI at the transmitter does not reduce the secrecy capacity at high SNR values.

V. Numerical Results

As an additional benchmark, we first obtain the performance when the transmitter does not have any knowledge of both the main and eavesdropper channels (only receiver CSI). In this scenario, the transmitter is unable to exploit rate/power adaptation and always transmits with power $\bar{P}$. It is straightforward to see that the achievable perfect secrecy rate in this scenario (using Gaussian inputs) is given by

$$\begin{aligned} R_s^{(R)} &= \left[\iint \log\left(\frac{1+h_M\bar{P}}{1+h_E\bar{P}}\right) f(h_M) f(h_E) \mathrm{d}h_M \mathrm{d}h_E\right]^+ \\ &= \left[\int_0^\infty \log\left(1+h_M\bar{P}\right) f(h_M)\mathrm{d}h_M - \int_0^\infty \log\left(1+h_E\bar{P}\right) f(h_E)\mathrm{d}h_E\right]^+ , \end{aligned}$$

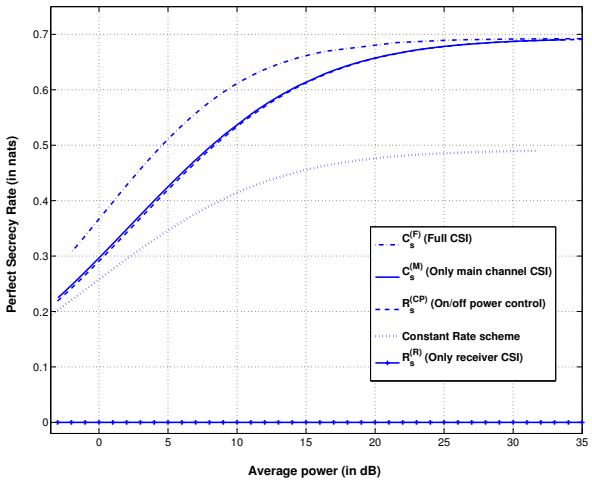

Fig. 2. Performance comparison for the symmetric scenario $\overline{\gamma}_M = \overline{\gamma}_E = 1$.

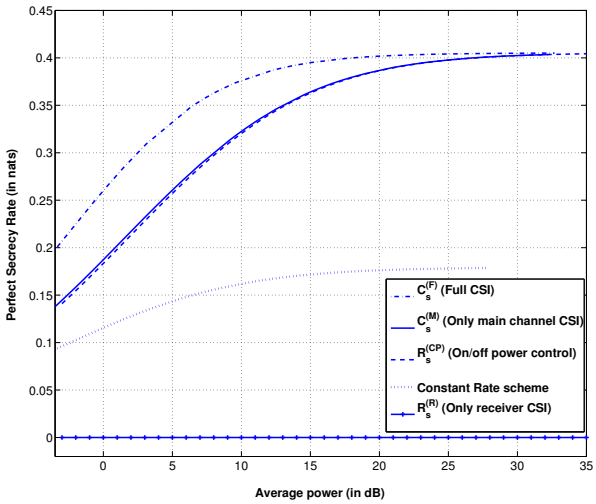

Fig. 3. Performance comparison for the asymmetric scenario $\overline{\gamma}_M = 1$ and $\overline{\gamma}_E = 2$.

which reduces to the following for the Rayleigh fading scenario

$$R_s^{(R)} = \left[\exp\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_M \bar{P}}\right) \mathrm{Ei}\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_M \bar{P}}\right) - \exp\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E \bar{P}}\right) \mathrm{Ei}\left(\frac{1}{\overline{\gamma}_E \bar{P}}\right)\right]^+.$$

Thus when $\overline{\gamma}_E \geq \overline{\gamma}_M$, $R_s^{(R)} = 0$. The results for the Rayleigh normalized-symmetric case ($\overline{\gamma}_M = \overline{\gamma}_E = 1$) are presented in Fig. 2. It is clear that the performance of the on/off power control scheme is very close to the secrecy capacity (with only main channel CSI) for a wide range of SNRs and, as expected, approaches the secrecy capacities, under both the full CSI and main channel CSI assumptions, at high values of SNR. The performance of the constant rate scheme is much worse than the other schemes that employ rate adaptation. Here we note that the performance curve for the constant rate scheme might be a lower bound to the secrecy capacity (since the KKT conditions are necessary but not sufficient for non-convex optimization). We then consider an asymmetric scenario, wherein the eavesdropper channel is more capable than the main channel, with $\overline{\gamma}_M = 1$ and $\overline{\gamma}_E = 2$. The performance results for this scenario are plotted in Fig. 3. Again it is clear from the plot that the performance of the on/off power control scheme is optimal at high values of SNR, and that rate adaptation schemes yield higher perfect secrecy rates than constant rate transmission schemes.

VI. Conclusions

We have characterized the secrecy capacity of the slow fading channel with an eavesdropper under different assumptions on the available transmitter CSI. Our work established the interesting result that a non-zero perfectly secure rate is achievable in the fading channel even when the eavesdropper is more capable than the legitimate receiver (on the average). By contrasting this conclusion with the traditional AWGN scenario, one can see the positive impact of fading on **enhancing** the secrecy capacity. Furthermore, we proposed a low-complexity on/off power transmission scheme and established its asymptotic optimality. This optimality showed that the presence of eavesdropper CSI at the transmitter does not offer additional gains in the secrecy capacity for slow fading channels, at high enough SNR levels. The knowledge of the main channel CSI, however, is crucial since it is easy to see that the absence of this information leads to a zero secrecy capacity when the eavesdropper is more capable than the legitimate receiver on the average. Finally, our theoretical and numerical results elucidated the critical role of appropriate rate adaptation in facilitating secure communications over slow fading channels.

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