Azrin replication Abstract

Under certain conditions, such as transitions across fixed ratio sizes, animals have been shown to turn off stimuli correlated with relatively larger ratios than previously experienced. The primary goal of the current study was to extend this research to progressive ratio schedules by manipulating the frequency of schedule changes. Four rats experienced three experimental conditions in which the opportunity to press a lever which shut off the discriminative stimulus and programmed contingency associated with the current schedule was always present. In Experiment 1, fixed ratio requirements were increased by 25 across daily sessions. In Experiment 2, the same rats were exposed to a progressive ratio schedule whereby ratios were increased after each food delivery, also by 25. During Experiment 3, the rats were exposed to a multiple FR25 FR 100 in which the availability of timeout was still available throughout both ratios. This experiment was included to control for the unidirectional increase in effort inherent to the progressive ratio. The primary finding of the current study was an increase in the number of timeouts during the larger ratios than the smaller ratios. Experiment 1 showed that fewer timeouts occurred at the lower ratios than the higher ratios. Experiment 2, showed a similar, albeit diminished results as Experiment 1, especially at the lower ratios. Similarly, Experiment 3 showed more self-induced timeouts during the FR100 than the FR25. While the results of the current study might suggest that the availability of timeout could function as a negative reinforcer from the higher effort correlated with larger ratios, it is still unclear if these timeouts were imposed as erroneous responses.