

Positive Psychological and Interpersonal Effects by Karaoke

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ABSTRACT

This report presents the findings of investigations of college students' participation in karaoke, their subjective moods induced by singing karaoke, and the positive effects associated with participating in karaoke, but not actively singing. In Study 1, 186 college students completed a questionnaire about their participation in karaoke. Most respondents indicated that they go to karaoke with several friends occasionally for amusement or as a pastime and feel comfortably tired after. These findings suggest that singing karaoke has positive psychological effects on mood. In Study 2, 185 college students completed a questionnaire. Respondents were asked to answer the questions about their usual participation in karaoke and their participation in karaoke when they did not actively sing. When they participated in karaoke without actively singing, the aim was primarily to be sociable with not only their friends, but also acquaintances or superiors. With regard to their mood following karaoke, respondents reported feeling more depressed, anxious, and tired and less refreshed when not actively singing as compared to when they actively sing. These results suggest that when college students participate in karaoke without actively singing, they experience negative psychological effects. However, there seem to be positive interpersonal effects of maintaining social relations with others when not actively singing. Consequently there would be beneficial effects from both active and passive participation in karaoke.

I. INTRODUCTION

Karaoke singing is a popular pastime in Japan and many people go to karaoke on a regular basis. Hatanaka and Miyakoshi (2003) reported that karaoke singing reduced anxiety among individuals with high anxiety levels, and suggested that the effect of karaoke singing is equivalent to that of mild exercise. However, how mood is influenced by singing karaoke remains unclear. Therefore, in first study, we investigated subjective mood induced by karaoke singing and the circumstances regarding general participation in karaoke among college students in Japan.

By the way, people may at times go to karaoke and not actively sing. The literature contains no reports on the psychological effects of such participation. Some may consider that respondents who do not actively sing would not benefit from participating in this way, but we hypothesize that here are also positive effects, albeit it different ones, associated with participating in but not actively singing at karaoke. Therefore, in next study we investigated reasons for going to karaoke to sing and not to actively sing, and the singing partners they go with when not actively singing, and the mood induced by karaoke without actively singing, in order to determine the positive effects of such participation.

II. STUDY 1

In Study 1, we investigated the circumstances regarding general participation in karaoke among college students in Japan and subjective mood induced by karaoke singing.

A. Method

1) *Respondents*. 174 female and 12 male college students ranging in age from 18 to 33 years ($M=20.33$, $SD=1.99$) participated in this study.

2) *Questionnaire*. Respondents completed a self-reported questionnaire which we had originally devised. The items were as follows.

1. frequency of participation in karaoke

Respondents were asked to answer a frequency of participation in karaoke per month.

2. average time spent in each karaoke visit

They were asked to answer average time spent in karaoke visit

3. number of karaoke partner

They were asked to answer a number of partners they go to karaoke with.

4. frequency of visits by type of karaoke partner

They were asked to rate each frequency that they go to karaoke with friends, family, boyfriends or girlfriends, and acquaintances on a 4-point scale where 1 = *not at all* to 4 = *very often*.

5. frequency of participating in karaoke by aim

They were asked to rate each frequency that they participate in karaoke for amusement, to pass time, to reduce stress, for socializing, and to practice singing on a 4-point scale where 1 = *not at all* to 4 = *very often*.

6. degree to which karaoke singing reduces stress

They were asked to rate degree to which karaoke singing reduces stress on a 4-point scale where 1 = *not at all* to 4 = *very frequent*.

7. mood before karaoke singing

They were asked to rate each degree of mood to which they feel before karaoke singing on a 4-point scale where 1 = *not at all* to 4 = *very frequent*. We selected 20 items from a Mood Inventory developed by Sakano, Fukui, Kumano, Horie, Kawahara, Yamamoto, Nomura, and Suematsu (1994).

8. mood after karaoke singing

We used same measures as for mood before karaoke singing.

B. Results and Discussion

1. Frequency of participation in karaoke

57.29% of respondents go to karaoke less than once a month, while 37.11% go once or twice per month and 2.79% go three or four times per month.

2. Average time spent in each karaoke visit

Average time was 3.59 h ($SD=1.14$).

3. Number of karaoke partner

Average number of partners respondents go to karaoke with was 3.88 ($SD=1.48$).

4. Frequency of visits by type of karaoke partner

Mean frequency that respondents go to karaoke with friends, family, boyfriends or girlfriends, and acquaintances were 3.29 ($SD=.85$), 1.46 ($SD=.74$), 1.36 ($SD=.68$), and 1.46 ($SD=.57$), respectively.

5. Frequency of participating in karaoke by aim

Mean frequency that respondents go to karaoke for amusement, to pass time, to reduce stress, for socializing, and to practice singing were 3.41 ($SD=.80$), 1.64 ($SD=.81$), 2.69 ($SD=1.15$), 2.09 ($SD=.80$), and 1.35 ($SD=.64$), respectively.

6. Degree to which karaoke singing reduces stress

Mean degree was 2.99 ($SD=.89$).

7. Mood before karaoke singing

Mean scores were slightly higher for feeling 'excited' ($M=2.56$, $SD=.72$) and 'lively' ($M=2.72$, $SD=.75$) than for the other items (Figure 1).

8. Mood after karaoke singing

Mean scores were also slightly higher for feeling 'excited' ($M=2.93$, $SD=1.09$) and 'lively' ($M=2.88$, $SD=.71$) than for the other items (Figure 1).

A comparison of the mood scores before and after karaoke singing using a *t*-test revealed significant differences between before and after karaoke singing for feeling 'excited' [$t(181)=-4.74$, $p<.01$], 'tense' [$t(181)=11.81$, $p<.01$], 'lively' [$t(181)=-2.95$, $p<.01$], 'dull' [$t(181)=-2.84$, $p<.01$], 'tired' [$t(181)=-3.87$, $p<.01$], 'exhausted' [$t(181)=-4.50$, $p<.01$], 'depressed' [$t(181)=4.62$, $p<.01$], 'anxious' [$t(181)=4.73$, $p<.01$], 'nervous' [$t(181)=2.92$, $p<.01$], and 'embarrassed' [$t(181)=-4.89$, $p<.01$] mood. 'Languid' mood showed a tendency of a significant difference [$t(181)=-1.70$, $p<.10$]. All other items showed no significant differences in mood before and after karaoke singing. In sum, respondents felt more 'excited', 'lively', 'tired', and 'exhausted' after karaoke singing and also felt less 'tense', 'dull', 'depressed', 'anxious', 'nervous', and 'embarrassed' after karaoke singing than before it.

These results suggest that college students in Japan occasionally go to karaoke with several friends for amusement or to pass time for around 2 to 4 hours each visit and they feel that karaoke singing can reduce stress. As regards to mood, they feel an elated mood both before and after karaoke singing, and specifically more elation and tiredness and less tension and anxiety following karaoke singing. These findings indicate that karaoke singing can induce feeling of being comfortably tired and it has positive effects on mood.

III. STUDY 2

In Study 2, we investigated partners with whom college students in Japan went to karaoke, reasons for participating in karaoke, and mood induced by karaoke when actively singing as usual and those when not actively singing.

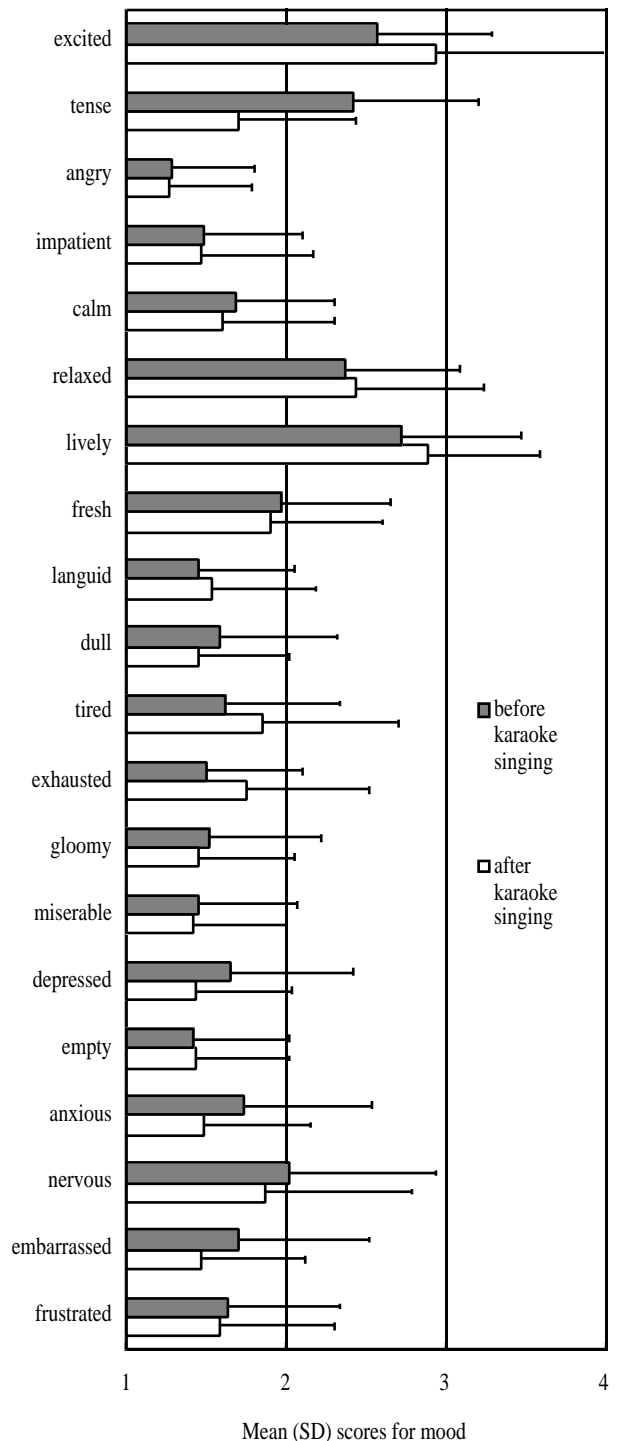


Figure 1. Mean ratings of mood before and after karaoke singing.

A. Method

1) *Respondents*. 185 college students (172 female, 11 male, and 2 unidentified) with an average age of 20.21 years ($SD=1.98$) participated.

2) *Questionnaire*. Respondents completed an originally developed questionnaire. It consisted of two parts. In the first part, concerning participation in karaoke singing, the

respondents were asked to answer each of questions 1 to 7, then to answer in part 2 those questions that applied to not actively singing in karaoke. The questions were as follows.

1. respondent's preference for karaoke

Respondents were asked to answer whether they preferred or not karaoke (1 = *dislike* to 5 = *like*).

2. frequency of participating in karaoke per month

They were asked to answer how frequent they went to karaoke per month (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *more than 6 times per month*).

3. average time spent in karaoke

They were asked to answer how long they spent in karaoke on average (1 = *less than 1 hour* to 5 = *more than 5 hours*).

4. partners with whom they went to karaoke

They were asked to select all partners with whom they went to karaoke from the options ('*friends*', '*seniors or superiors*', '*family*', '*boyfriends or girlfriends*', '*acquaintances*', and '*other*').

5. reasons for participating in karaoke

They were asked to select all reasons for participating in karaoke from the options ('*to reduce stress*', '*to socialize*', '*to promote communication with each other*', '*for amusement*', '*as a pastime*', '*to practice singing*', and '*other*').

6. mood induced by karaoke

We selected 20 items from a Mood Inventory developed by Sakano et al. (1994). The inventory consisted of the 5 subscales of 'tension and excitement', 'refreshing mood', 'fatigue', 'depressive mood', and 'anxious mood'. Respondents were asked to rate on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very much*) whether they felt each mood when they participated in karaoke

7. psychological effects of participating in karaoke.

They were asked to answer whether they got any psychological effects of participating in karaoke (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very much*).

In part 2 of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to also answer the following questions from 8 to 12 or only 8 about their participation in karaoke when not actively singing.

8. experiences of participation in karaoke without actively singing

Respondents were asked to answer whether they had experiences of participation in karaoke without actively singing (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very frequently*). Only those respondents who selected rating 3, 4, or 5 ('*neither of them*', '*relatively frequent*', or '*very frequent*') were asked to continue responding to the remaining questions.

9. reasons for not actively singing

They were asked to select all reasons for participation in karaoke without actively singing from the options ['*not enjoying karaoke*', '*feeling mentally tired from being with the other participants*', '*feeling ashamed to sing*', '*not feeling so well generally*', '*not keeping up with popular songs*', '*getting nervous in front of someone (people) I don't know*', '*feeling like going home right away*', '*losing my nerve in front of someone/others who sing well*', and '*other*'].

10. partners with whom they went to karaoke without actively singing

They were asked to select all partners with whom they went to karaoke when they didn't actively sing from the options

('*friends*', '*seniors or superiors*', '*family*', '*boyfriends or girlfriends*', '*acquaintances*', and '*other*').

11. reasons for participating in karaoke without actively singing

They were asked to select all reasons for participating in karaoke when they didn't actively sing from the options ('*to reduce stress*', '*to socialize*', '*to promote communication with each other*', '*for amusement*', '*as a pastime*', '*to practice singing*', and '*other*').

12. Mood induced by karaoke when without actively singing

We selected the same 20 from the Mood Inventory (Sakano et al., 1994) as used in question 6 and respondents rated each mood when they had participated in karaoke without actively singing on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very much*).

B. Results and Discussion

1) Usual Participation in Karaoke.

1. preference for karaoke

The vast majority of respondents '*liked*' or '*relatively liked*' singing at karaoke ($n=137$, 74.05%), and 19 respondents answered they '*disliked*' or '*relatively disliked*' it (10.38%). The average rating was 4.03 ($SD = 1.10$).

2. frequency of participating in karaoke per month

Many respondents went to karaoke to sing '*less than once per month*' ($n=119$, 65.03%) and the average score was 2.10 ($SD=.64$).

3. average time spent in karaoke

Respondents selected '*from 2 to 3 hours*' ($n=116$, 63.39%) more than other choices, and an average rating was 3.43 ($SD=.92$).

4. partners with whom they went to karaoke

The breakdown of responses was, in descending order, '*friends*' (67.56%), '*family*' (12.30%), '*boyfriends or girlfriends*' (9.16%), '*seniors or superiors*' (4.96%), '*acquaintances*' (4.58%), and '*other*' (1.15%).

5. reasons for participating in karaoke

The breakdown of responses was in descending order, '*for amusement*' (38.19%) more than '*to reduce stress*' (27.64%), '*to socialize*' (20.60%), '*as a pastime*' (7.04%), '*to promote communication with each other*' (4.52%), '*to practice singing*' (2.01%), and '*other*' (.00%) as shown in Figure 2.

6. mood induced by karaoke

The mean ratings of 'tension and excitement', 'refreshing mood', 'fatigue', 'depressive mood', and 'anxious mood' were 2.61 ($SD=1.11$), 2.75 ($SD=1.03$), 1.76 ($SD=.92$), 1.62 ($SD=.95$), and 1.98 ($SD=1.05$), respectively (Figure 3).

7. psychological effects by participating in karaoke

Many respondents answered '*very much*' or '*relatively much*' ($n=147$, 85.03%), and an average was 3.89 ($SD=1.12$).

2) Participation in Karaoke without Actively Singing.

8. experiences of participation in karaoke without actively singing

Almost half of respondents had participated in karaoke at some time without actively singing: 60 answered '*very frequently*' or '*relatively frequently*' (51.69%), with 75 responding '*not at all*' or '*not much*' (42.13%). An average was 3.03 ($SD = 1.44$).

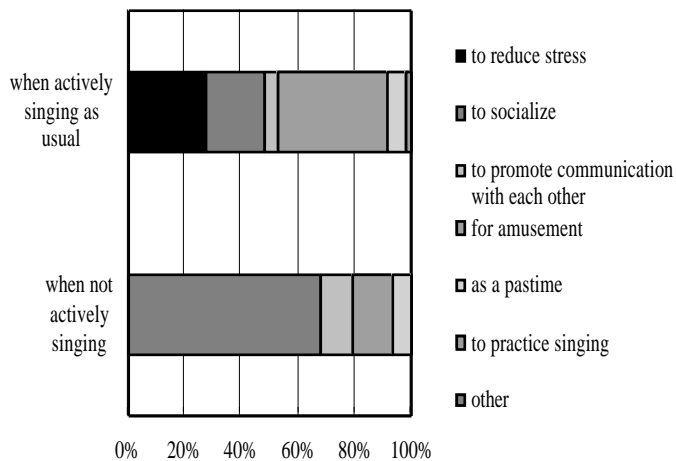


Figure 2. Rating of each reason for participating in karaoke when actively singing as usual and when not actively singing.

9. reasons for not actively singing

The breakdown of responses was in descending order, 'being ashamed to sing' (25.79%), 'losing my nerve in front of someone/others who sing well' (22.62%), 'feeling mentally tired from being with the other participants' (14.93%), 'not enjoying karaoke' (14.48%), 'not keeping up with popular songs' (8.14%), 'getting nervous in front of someone/others I don't know' (8.14%), 'not feeling so well generally' (2.26%), 'feeling like going home right away' (1.35%), and 'other' (2.26%).

10. partners with whom they went to karaoke

'Friends' (42.03%) was the most popular answer, followed by 'acquaintances' (24.64%), 'seniors or superiors' (21.74%), 'boyfriends or girlfriends' (5.07%), 'family' (2.17%), or 'other' (4.35%).

11. reasons for participating in karaoke without actively singing

The breakdown of responses was in descending order, 'to socialize' (66.90%), 'for amusement' (13.38%), 'to promote communication with each other' (11.98%), 'as a pastime' (6.34%), 'to reduce stress' (.70%), 'other' (.70%), and 'to practice singing' (.00%) as shown in Figure 2.

12. mood induced by karaoke when not actively singing

Mean ratings for 'tension and excitement', 'refreshing mood', 'fatigue', 'depressive mood', and 'anxious mood' were 2.62 (SD = 1.12), 2.28 (SD = 1.00), 3.01 (SD = 1.20), 2.81 (SD = 1.17), and 2.93 (SD = 1.20), respectively (Figure 3).

3) Comparison of Mood for Participating in Karaoke between when Actively Singing as Usual and when not Actively Singing

A comparison of the ratings of mood when participating in karaoke without actively singing and when actively singing as usual was conducted using a *t*-test. Significant differences were found between usual participation and participation without actively singing for 'refreshing mood' [$t(98)=8.37, p<.01$], 'fatigue' [$t(98)=-10.65, p<.01$], 'depressive mood' [$t(97)=-9.06, p<.01$], and 'anxious mood' [$t(98)=-8.29, p<.01$]. With regard to 'tension and excitement', there were no significances [$t(98)=1.39, n.s.$].

As a result, respondents had more 'fatigue', 'depressive mood', and 'anxious mood' and less 'refreshing mood' on

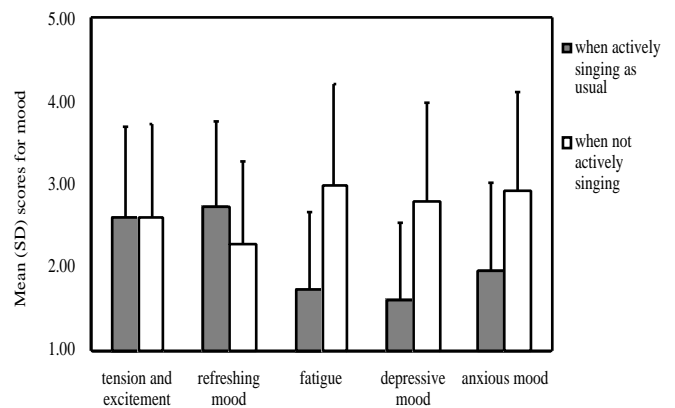


Figure 3. Mean ratings of mood for participating in karaoke when actively singing as usual and when not actively singing.

participating in karaoke without actively singing than usual participation (Figure 3).

These results suggest that college students in Japan prefer to go to karaoke to actively sing, occasionally going to karaoke with friends or people who have close relationships with them. They go to karaoke for amusement, to reduce stress, and socializing, and they feel less fatigue, depressive mood, and anxious mood from their active participation in singing.

But, almost half of the college students sampled go to karaoke without actively singing sometimes. They tend not to sing for reasons such as being ashamed to sing, losing their nerve in front of others who sing well, being mentally tired from being with the other participants, and not actually enjoying karaoke. They go to karaoke with not only friends but also acquaintances and seniors or superiors when not actively singing, with the principal aims of socializing, or for amusement and promoting communication with each other. They often feel some fatigue, depressive mood, and anxious mood when not actively singing.

Because college students feel more fatigue, depressive mood, and anxious mood, and less refreshing mood when not actively singing compared to when they do actively sing as usual, there are not positive but actually negative psychological effects on such participation, which is contrary to our hypothesis. However, there do seem to be some positive interpersonal effects to not actively singing, to maintain social relations with others rather than just to have a pleasant time at karaoke in private. Therefore, participation in karaoke without actively singing affords positive effects different from those afforded by active singing participation in karaoke. In short, both forms of participation in karaoke can have beneficial effects.

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