



# Expanding the map: Emotional Fit and Subjective Wellbeing in the Mediterranean

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# Emotions differ across cultures



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## Cultural Affordances and Emotional Experience: Socially Engaging and Disengaging Emotions in Japan and the United States

Shinobu Kitayama  
University of Michigan


Batja Mesquita  
Wake Forest University

Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)



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Current Opinion in Psychology

## The cultural construction of emotions

Batja Mesquita, Michael Boiger and Jozefien De Leersnyder

A large body of an emotions has yielded experience is culture experience those

Emotion  
2018, Vol. 18, No. 8, 1142–1162

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1528-3542/18/\$12.00 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/emo0000390>

## Beyond Essentialism: Cultural Differences in Emotions Revisited

Michael Boiger, Eva Ceulemans,  
and Jozefien De Leersnyder  
University of Leuven

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The current research offers an alternative to essentialism for studying cultural variation in emotional experience. Rather than assuming that individuals always experience an emotion in the same way, our starting point was that the experience of an emotion like anger or shame may vary from one instance to

# The Cultural Self: Different Ideas



## West

Strong Focus on  
**Disengaging**  
Emotions

## East-Asia

Strong Focus on  
**Engaging**  
Emotions

**Higher emotional fit with one's cultural environment is associated with better psychological outcomes.**

**Subjective Well-being  
Somatic Health  
Relationship Satisfaction**

# The Mediterranean – an understudied region

**Honor** as a central driver of social behavior and relationships

**Honor** combines both individual and relational elements:

- ❖ **Individual Focus** (*distinguishing yourself positively, personal autonomy, strength, self-reliance*)
- ❖ **Relationship Focus** (*maintaining positive relationships, commitment to others' well-being, importance of group reputation*).



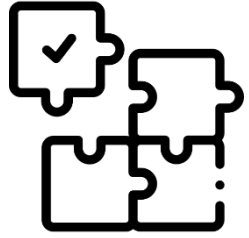
**Focus on  
Disengaging  
Emotions**



**Focus on  
Engaging  
Emotions**



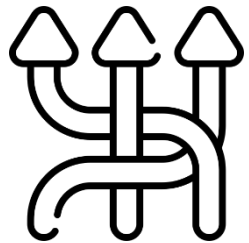
# Goals of the Present Work



**Do individuals show emotional with their culture? (*Conc. Repl.*)**

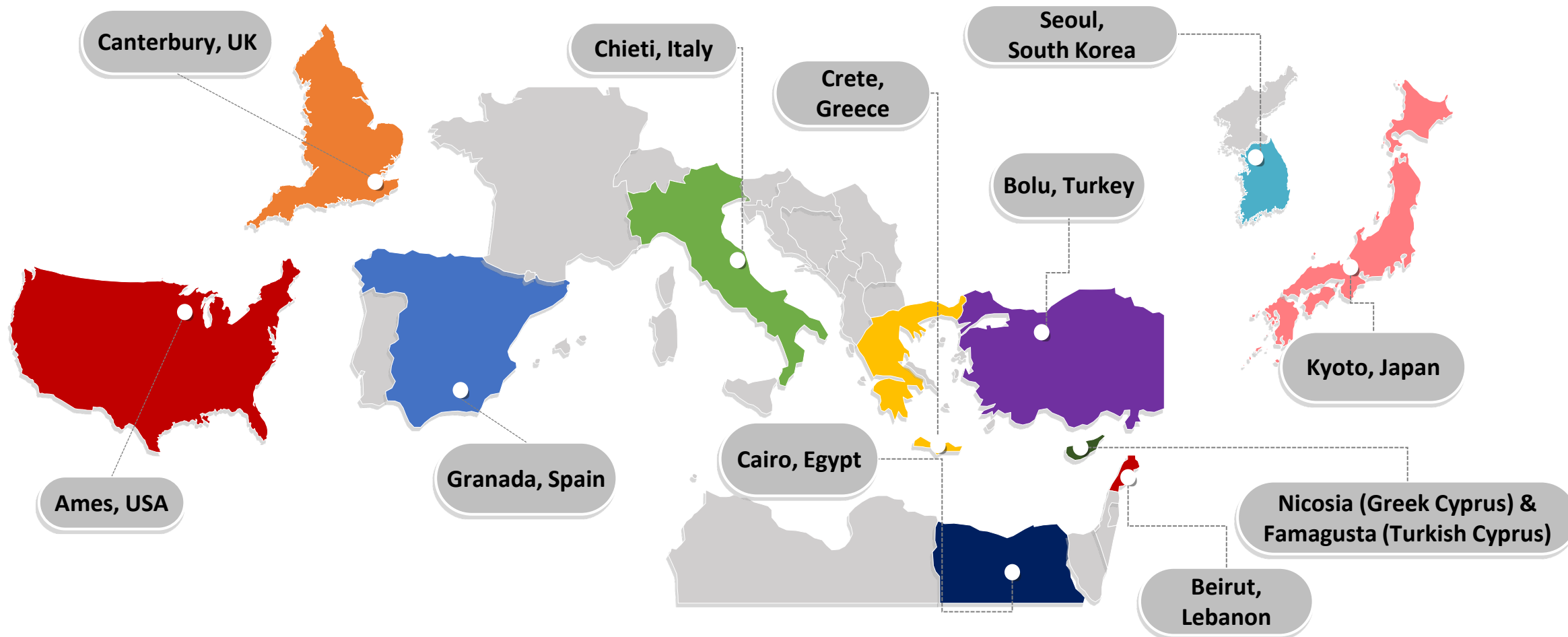


**Is emotional fit linked to better well-being? (*Conc. Repl.*)**



**Is fit in certain types of emotions more beneficial in some cultures than others?**

# Method: Participants



**$N = 3097$  | Female = 55% |  $M_{Age} = 21.45$  |  $M_{SES} = 6.05$  (1-10)**

# Method: Measures

## Implicit Social Orientation

### Questionnaire (Kitayama & Park, 2007)

Ratings of 12 emotions for 10 situation vignettes ('daily life situations')

<b>Situation 1:</b> "Positive interaction with friends"
<b>Situation 2:</b> "Got ill or injured"
<b>Situation 3:</b> "Were overloaded with work"
<b>Situation 4:</b> "Had a problem with a family member"



1	Ashamed
2	Guilty
3	Friendly Feelings
4	Feelings of closeness
5	Frustration
6	Angry
7	Self-esteem
8	Proud
9	Happy
10	Elated
11	Calm
12	Unhappy

**Situation-level SWB**



# Method: Measures

## **Life Domain Satisfaction** (OECD, 2014)

Life Satisfaction Ratings (1-10) across 9 life domains (e.g., *health, safety, personal relationships, future security, self-achievement*)

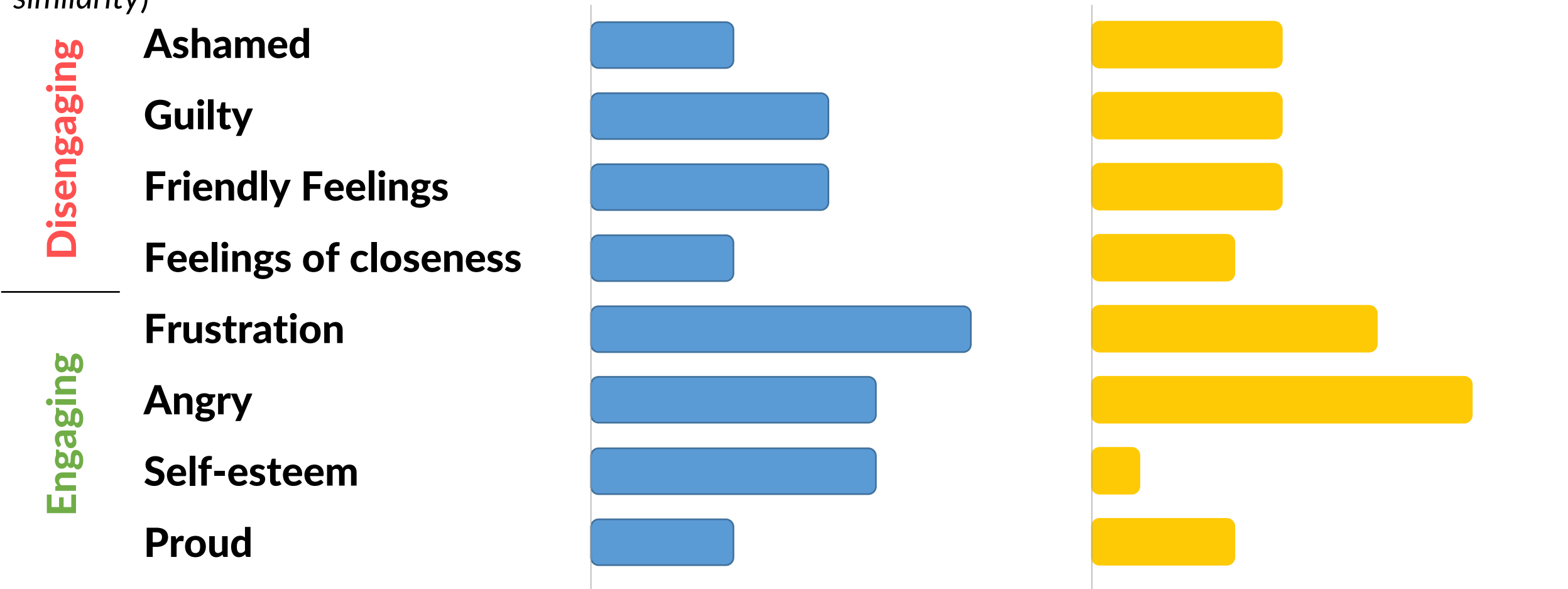
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# Results: Calculating Fit

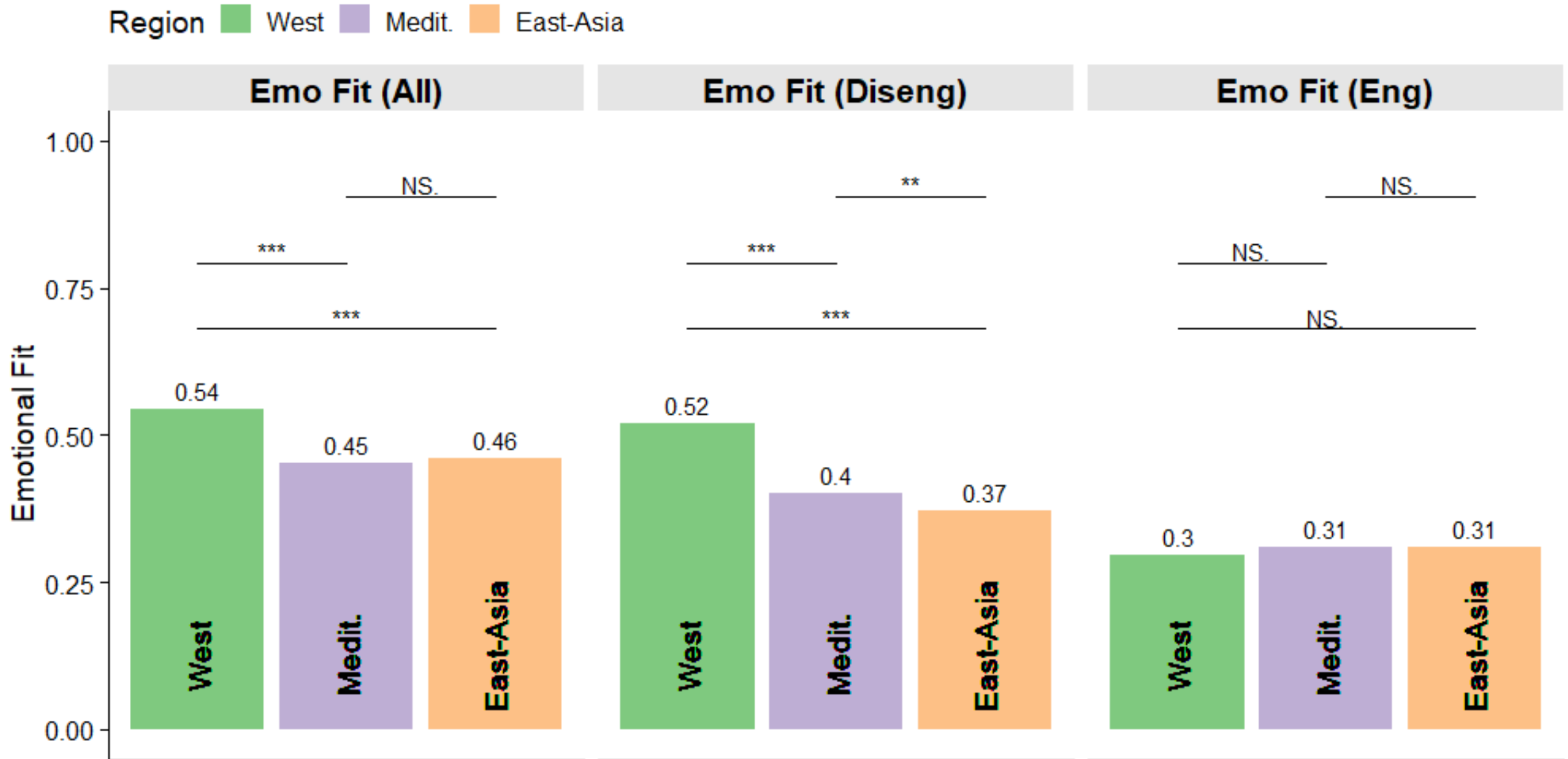
**ICC – Double Entry** (McCrae, 2008):  
 Range 0 to 1 (*higher values = higher similarity*)

**Individual**  
*(Raw Ratings)*

**Country**  
*(Person-excluded averages)*



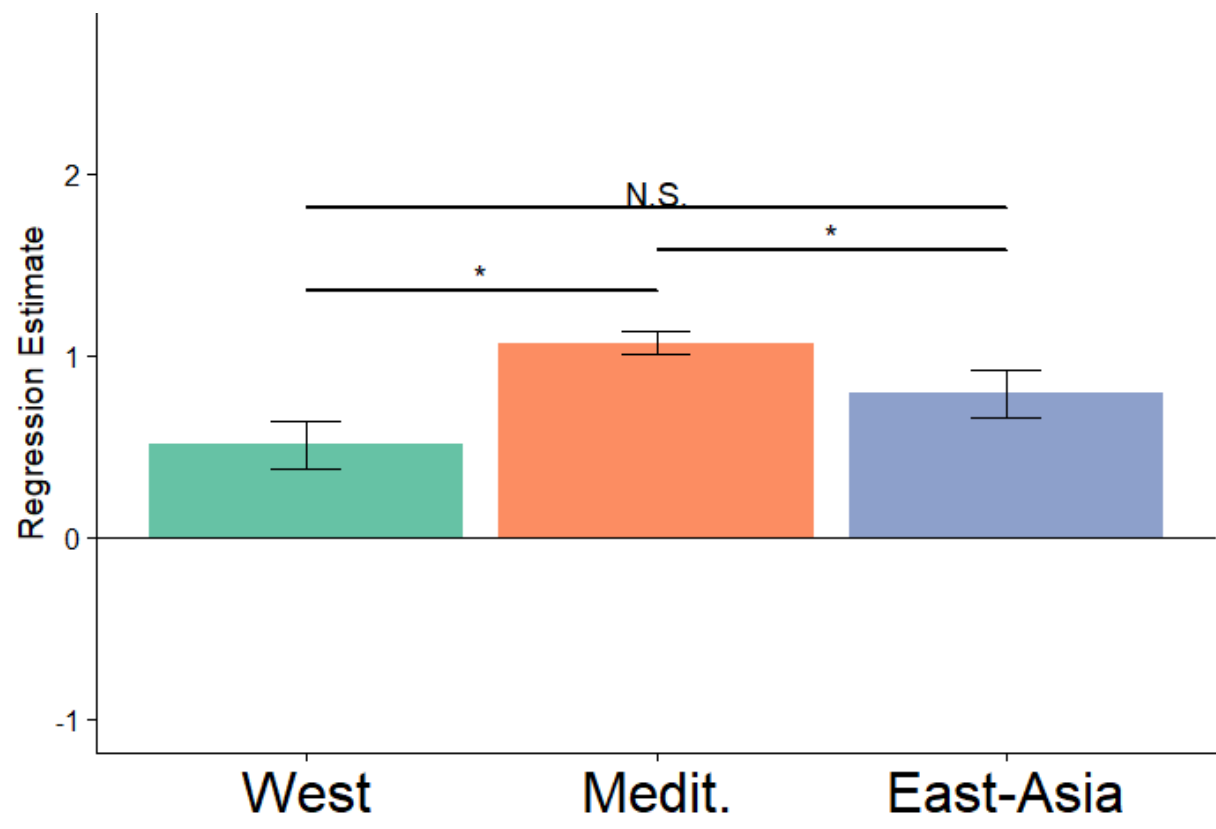
# Results: Levels of Emotional Fit



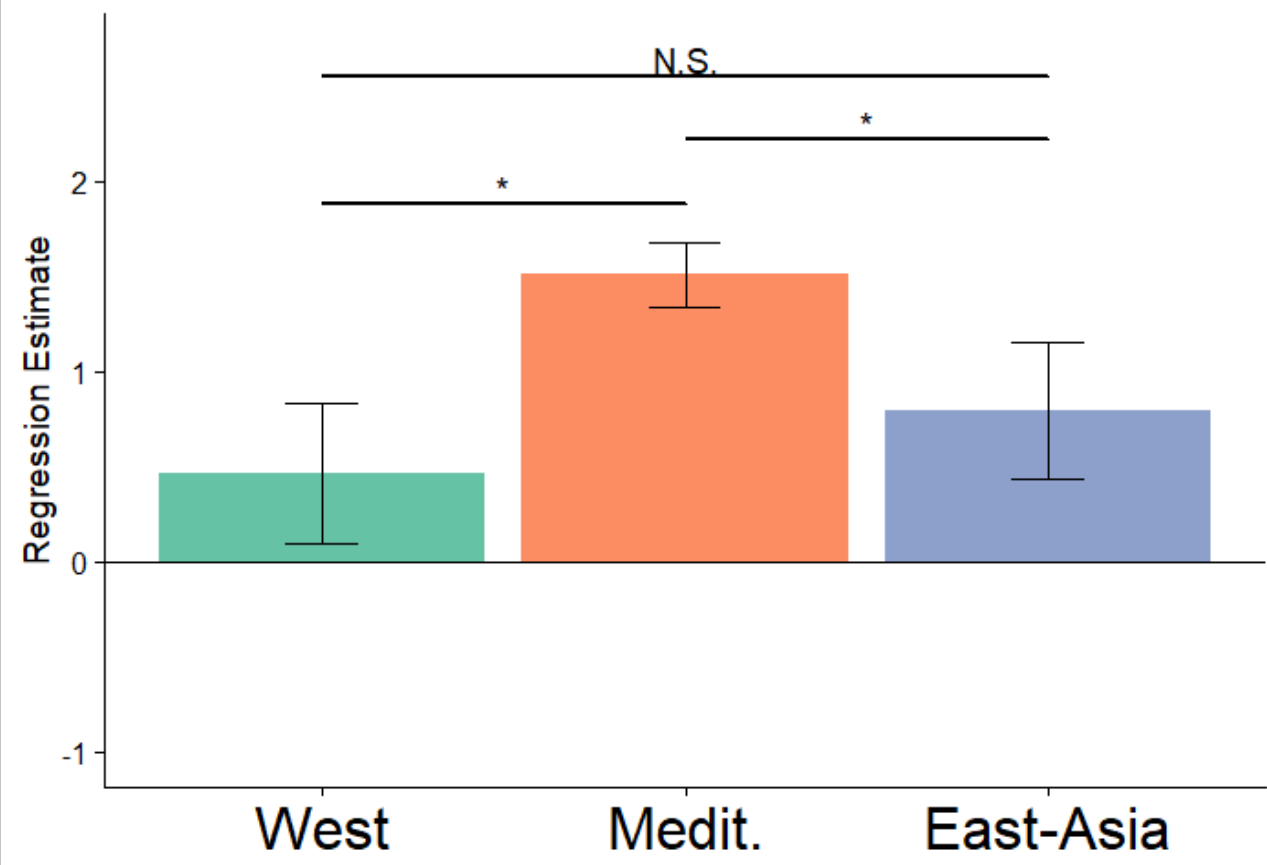
# Results: Emotional Fit → Well-being



### Situational Level (General Positive Emotions)



### Person Level (OECD Life Satisfaction)

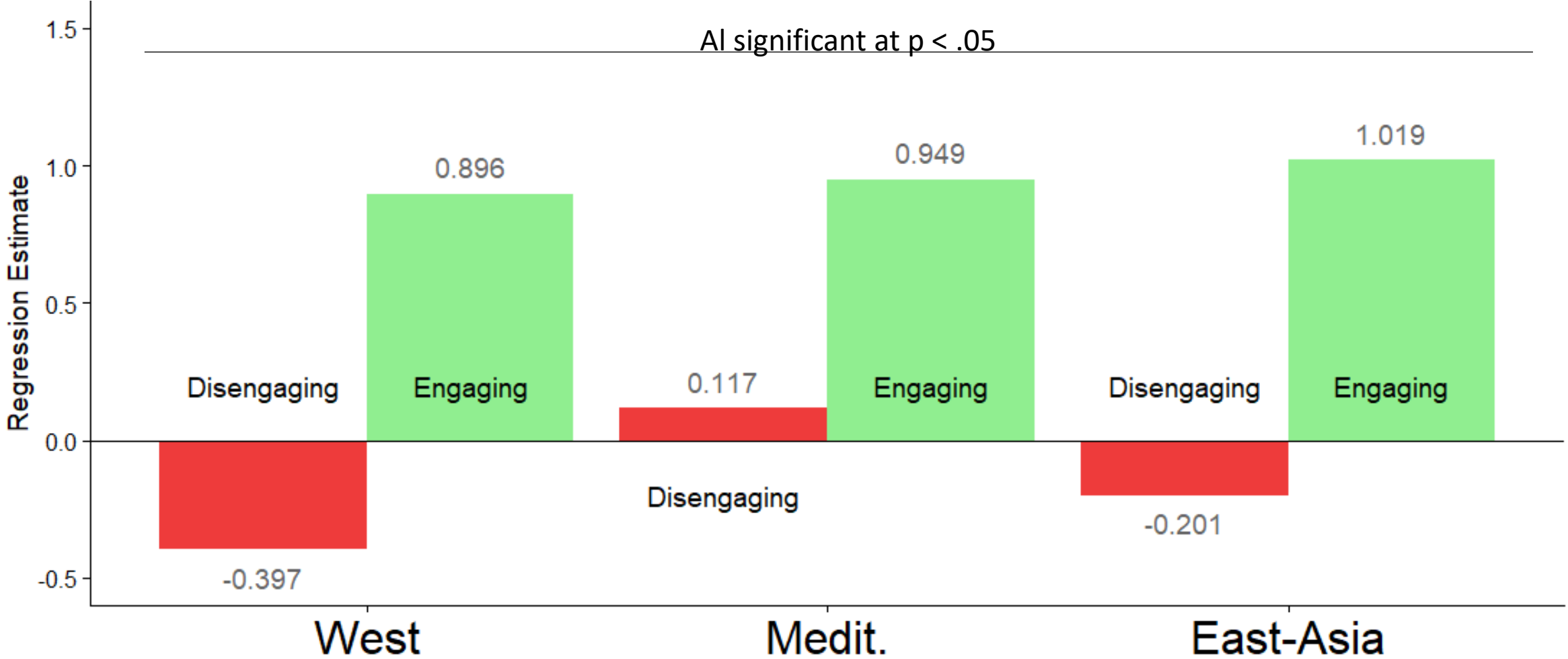




# Results: Fit in Emotion Groups & Well-being

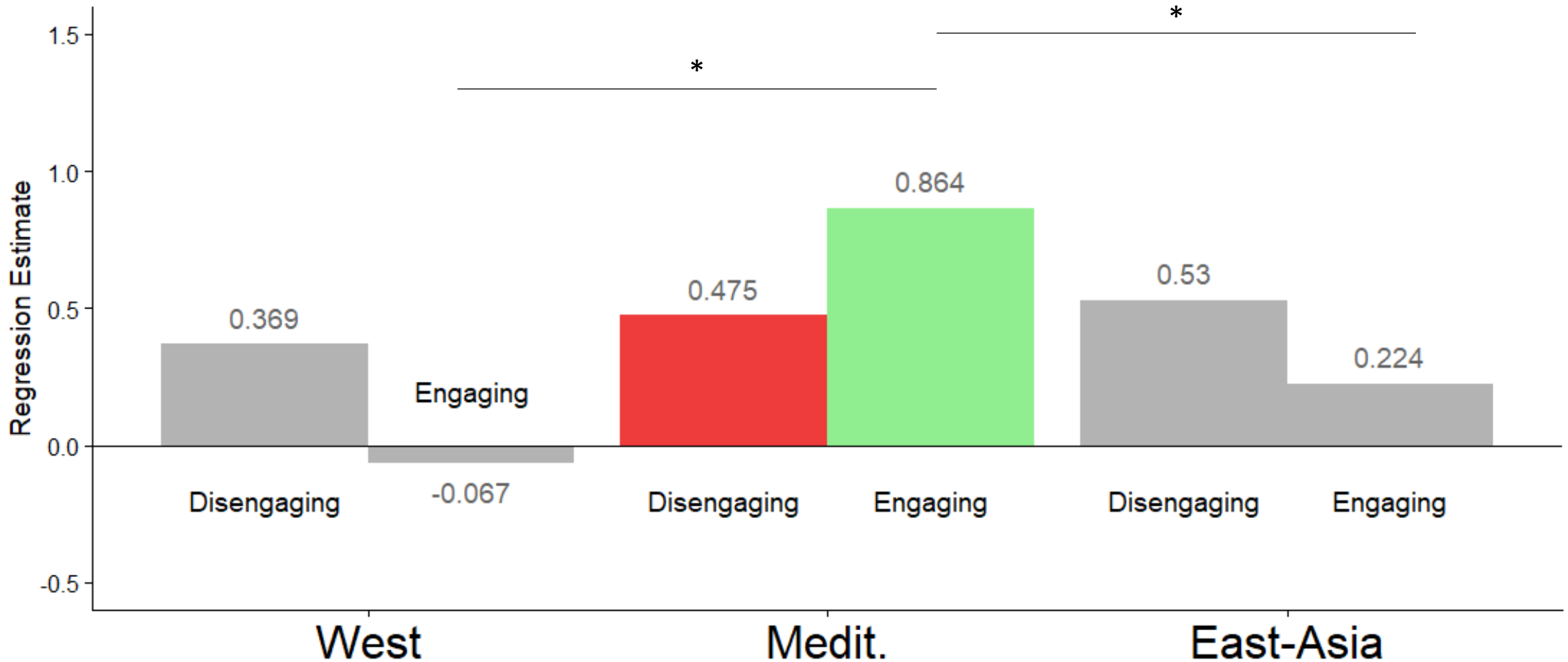


## Situational Level (General Positive Emotions)



# Results: Fit in Emotion Groups & Well-being

## Person Level (OECD Life Satisfaction)



# What have we learned?

- ❖ Individuals **experience similar emotions** as people in their cultural environment
- ❖ Stronger **emotional fit is linked to better well-being** across all cultures under study
- ❖ Mediterranean cultures showed a **distinct profile of emotional fit** in which both disengaging and engaging emotion fit were linked to better well-being

# Thank you!



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