



# Rebranding China's Country Image

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# Abstract

- China global economies and politics have been improved, advanced and integrated significantly since 1980. Yet, there are many countries and citizens are not properly well informed and aware of China actual advancement and competitive advantage. Rather mixed and confused messages have been going on between China economics and China politics (especially, under the name of “Communism” that has been strongly crafted and labelled by the Western countries as a very “negative” term and implication for decades).
- The purpose of this presentation is to discuss and recommend how to “rebrand” China’s country image effectively and strategically in the global arena in order to achieve favorable and positive brand awareness, brand association, and brand loyalty to China.
- This study is using the Keller’s model of the Brand Resonance Pyramid and upward & downward stretch strategies, country-of-origin effects (COOE) to reposition & rebrand China’s country image more favorably and positively.

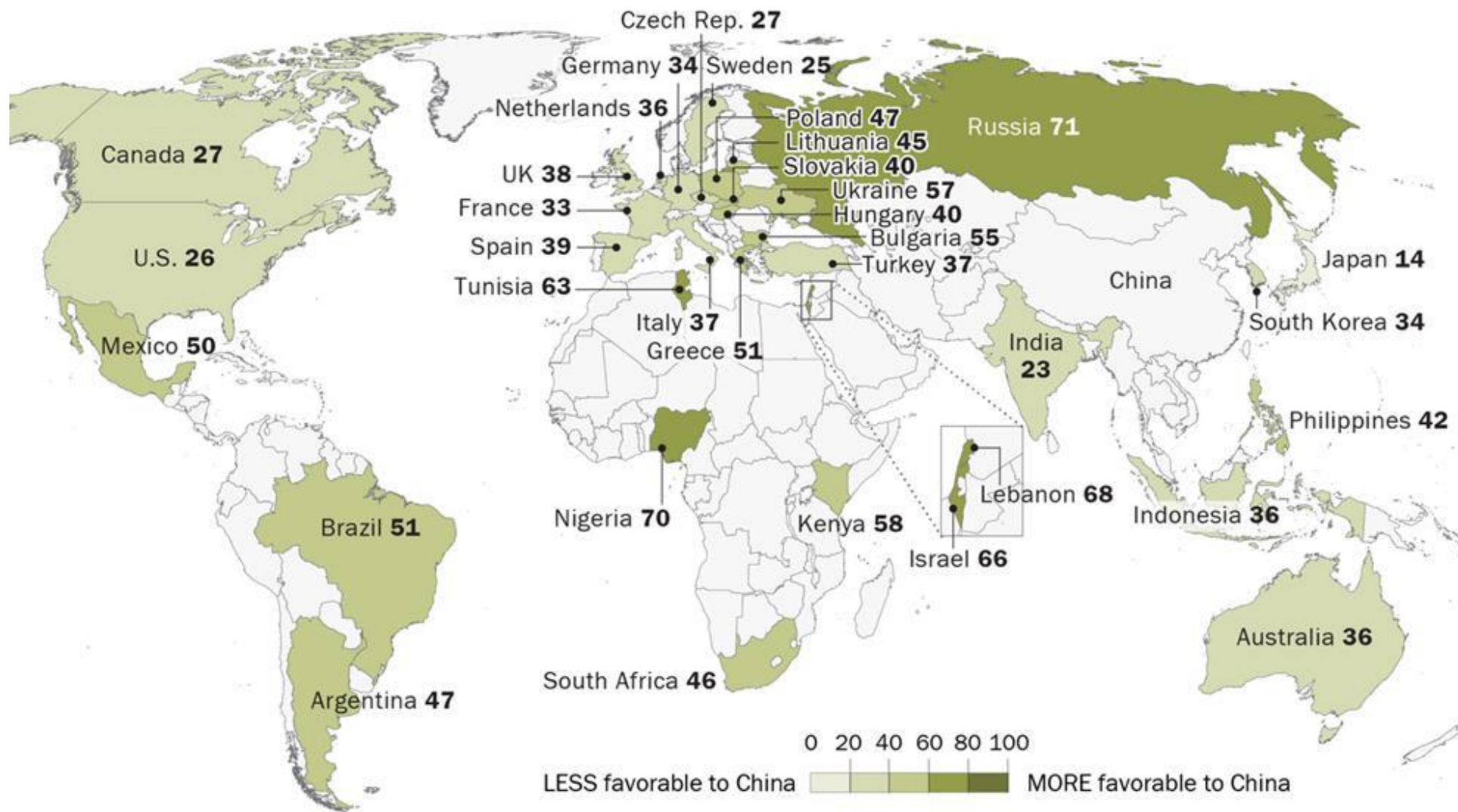
# Generalization of China's Country Image

(source from Pew Research Center, Silver, L., Devlin, K. & Huang, C., Dec. 4, 2019)

- China's economic growth mostly welcomed in **emerging markets**, but neighbors wary of its influence.
- Age is another factor in how people view China. In 19 countries, those ages **18 to 29** are more likely than those ages 50 and older **to hold a favorable view of China.**

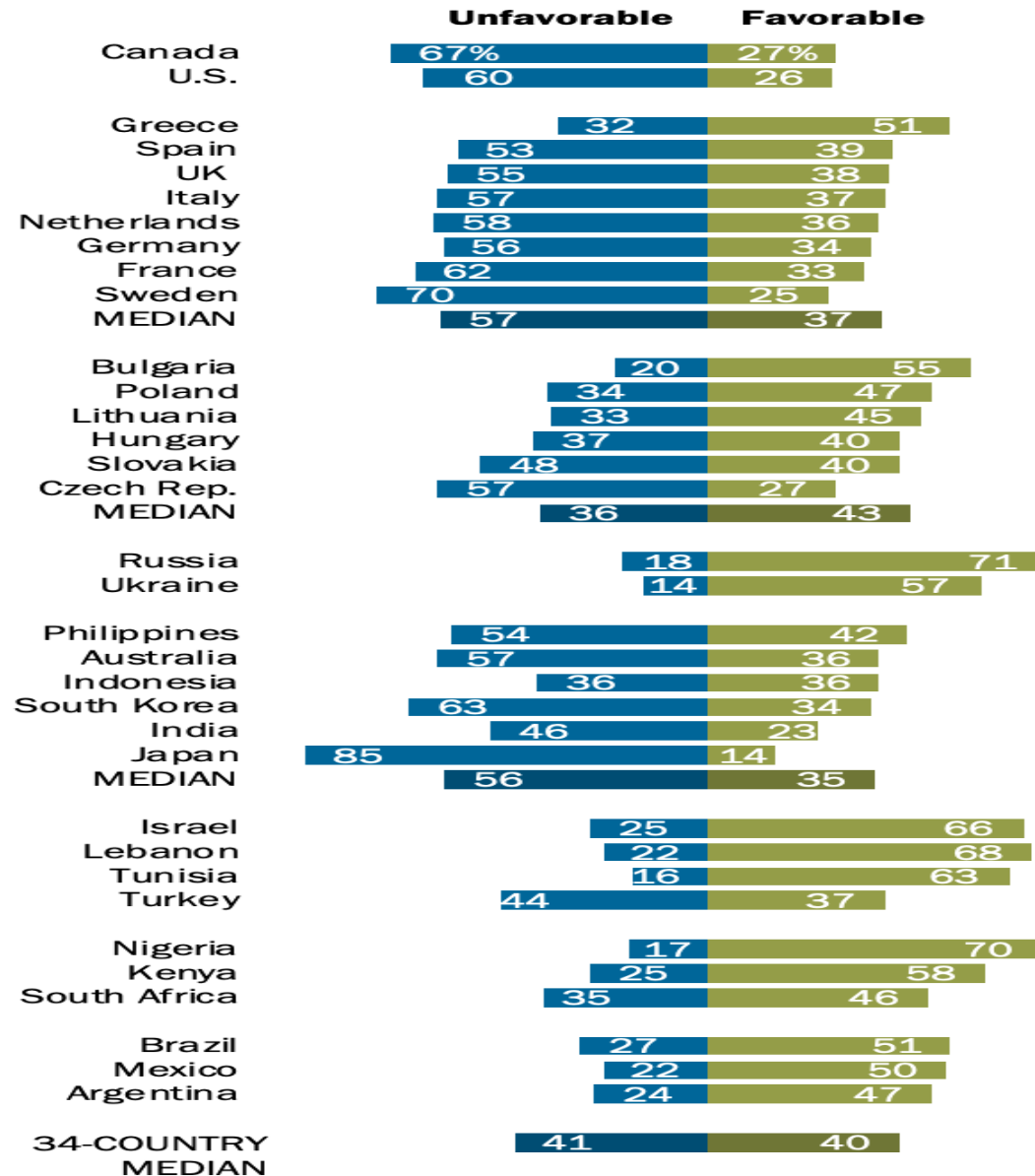
## Mixed views of China around the globe

*% who have a favorable view of China*



# International opinions of China divided

% who have a \_\_\_ opinion of China



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

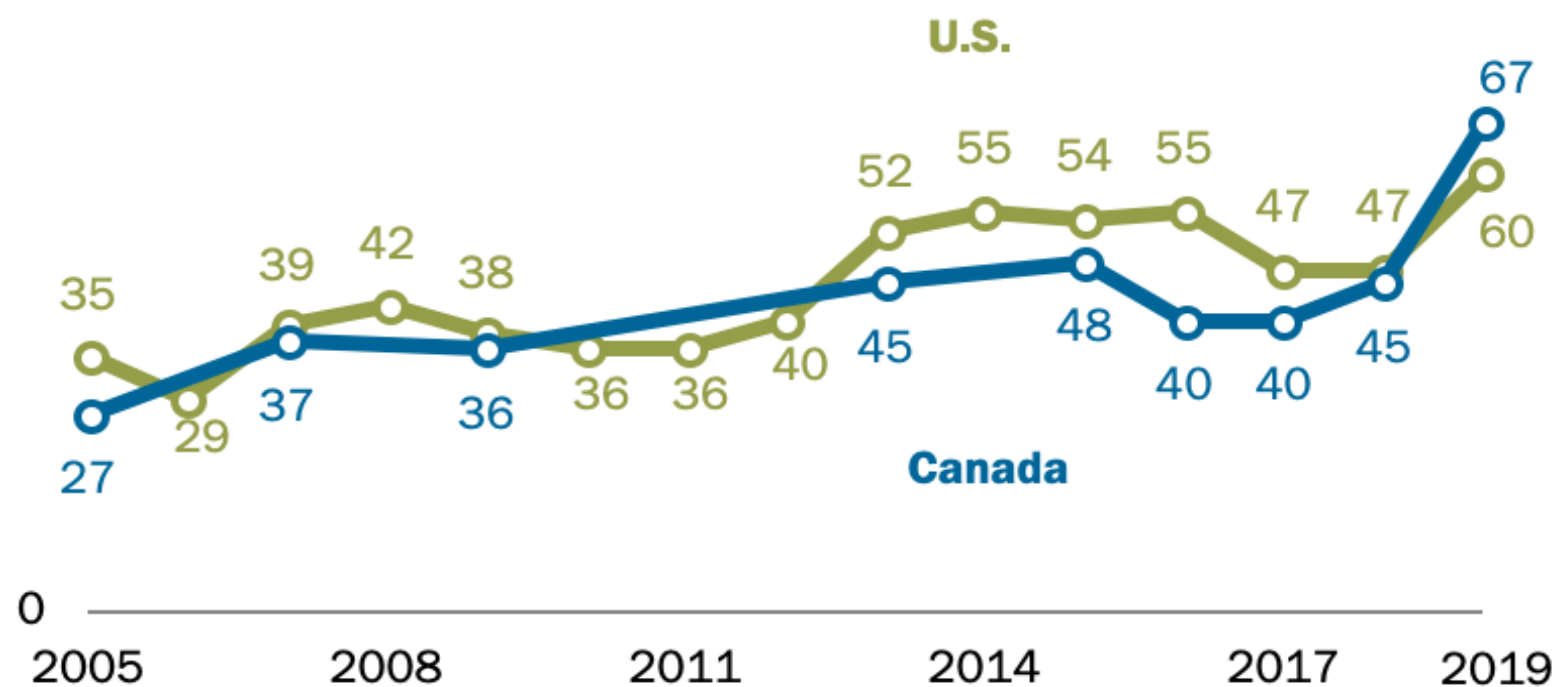
Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q8b.

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## Negative views of China up sharply in Canada, U.S.

% who have an unfavorable view of China

100%



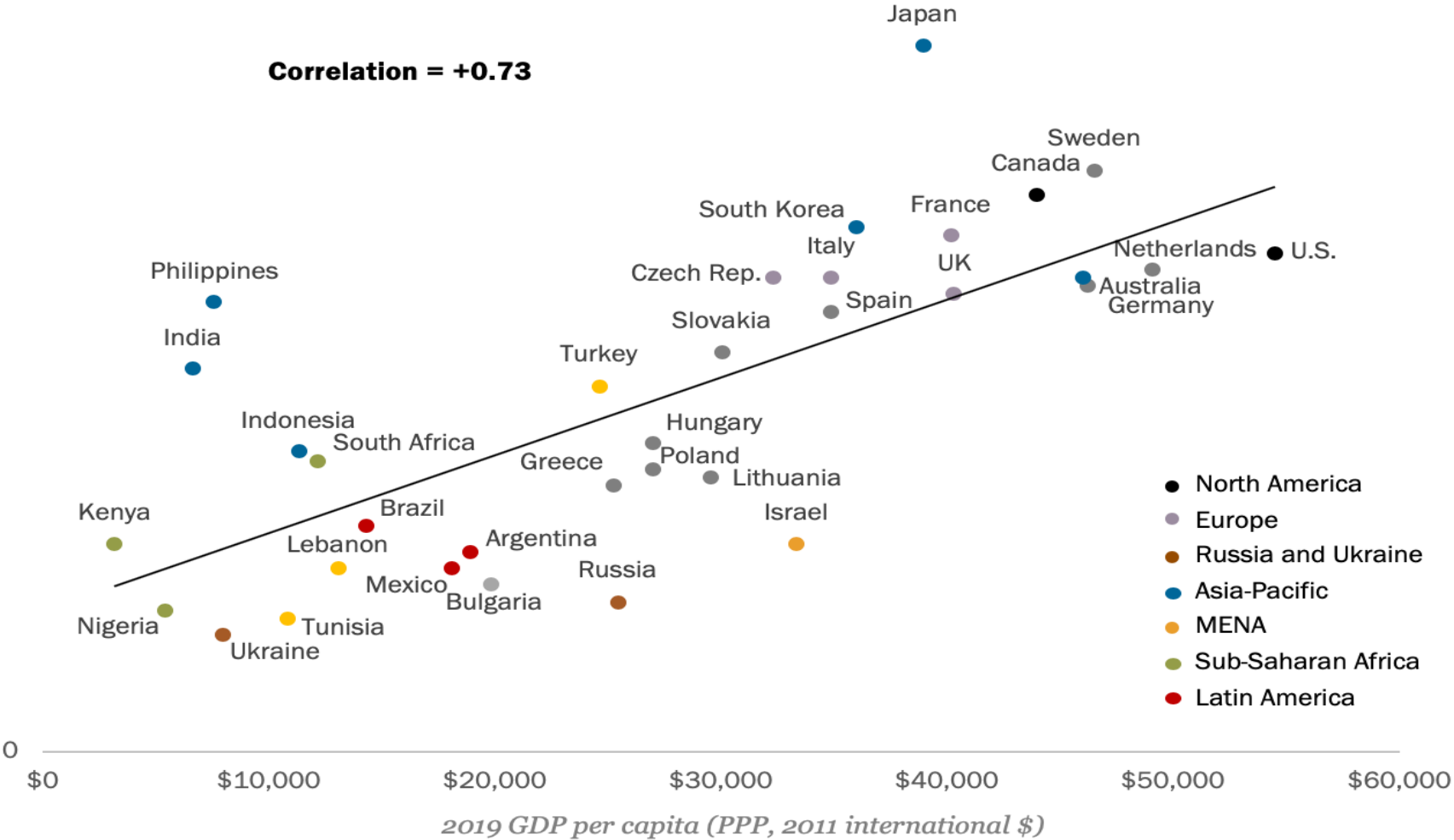
Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q8b.

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# Publics in wealthier countries less favorable toward China

% who have an unfavorable view of China

100%



Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q8b. GDP data from the International Monetary Fund accessed October 2019.

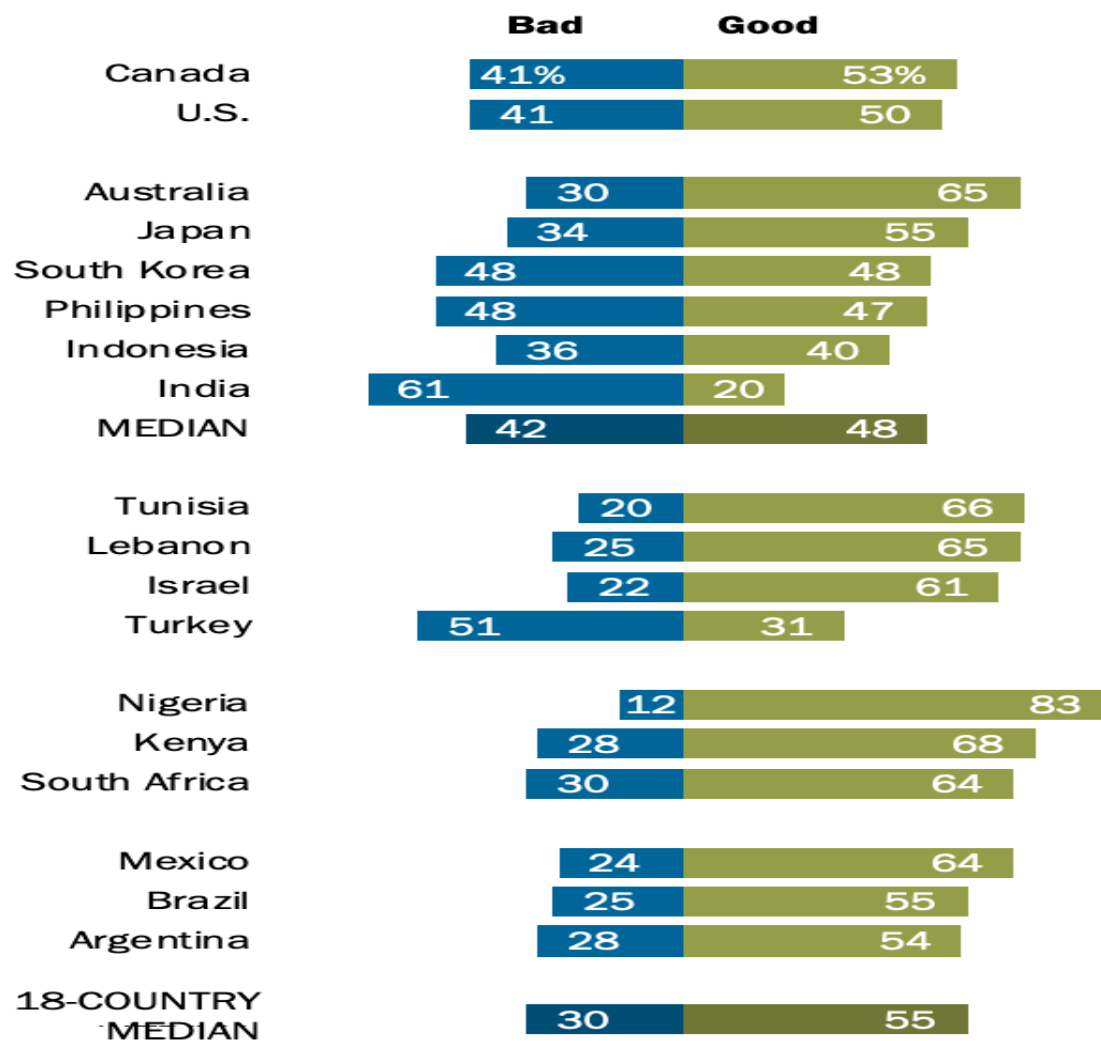
# The Impacts of Exports from China

- Countries that receive more exports from China tend to have more negative views of China, this measure is also strongly associated with GDP per capita.
- The **U.S. and Japan** receive the most exports from China among the countries surveyed, and they also have much more negative views of China overall.
- Meanwhile, **Lebanon, Tunisia and Bulgaria** receive relatively few Chinese exports, majorities in these countries view China in a positive light.

- **Indonesia**, for example, has received more than \$47 billion for capital investment and construction projects from China since 2005, but attitudes toward China in the country are split evenly, with 36% favorable and 36% unfavorable.
- On the other hand, China has sent **Nigeria** \$44 billion in the same time, and 70% of Nigerians view China favorably.

## Many see a strengthening Chinese economy as a boon

*% who say China's growing economy is a \_\_\_ thing for their country*



Note: Don't know responses not shown.

Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q41.

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## Many see growing benefits to China's economy over past five years

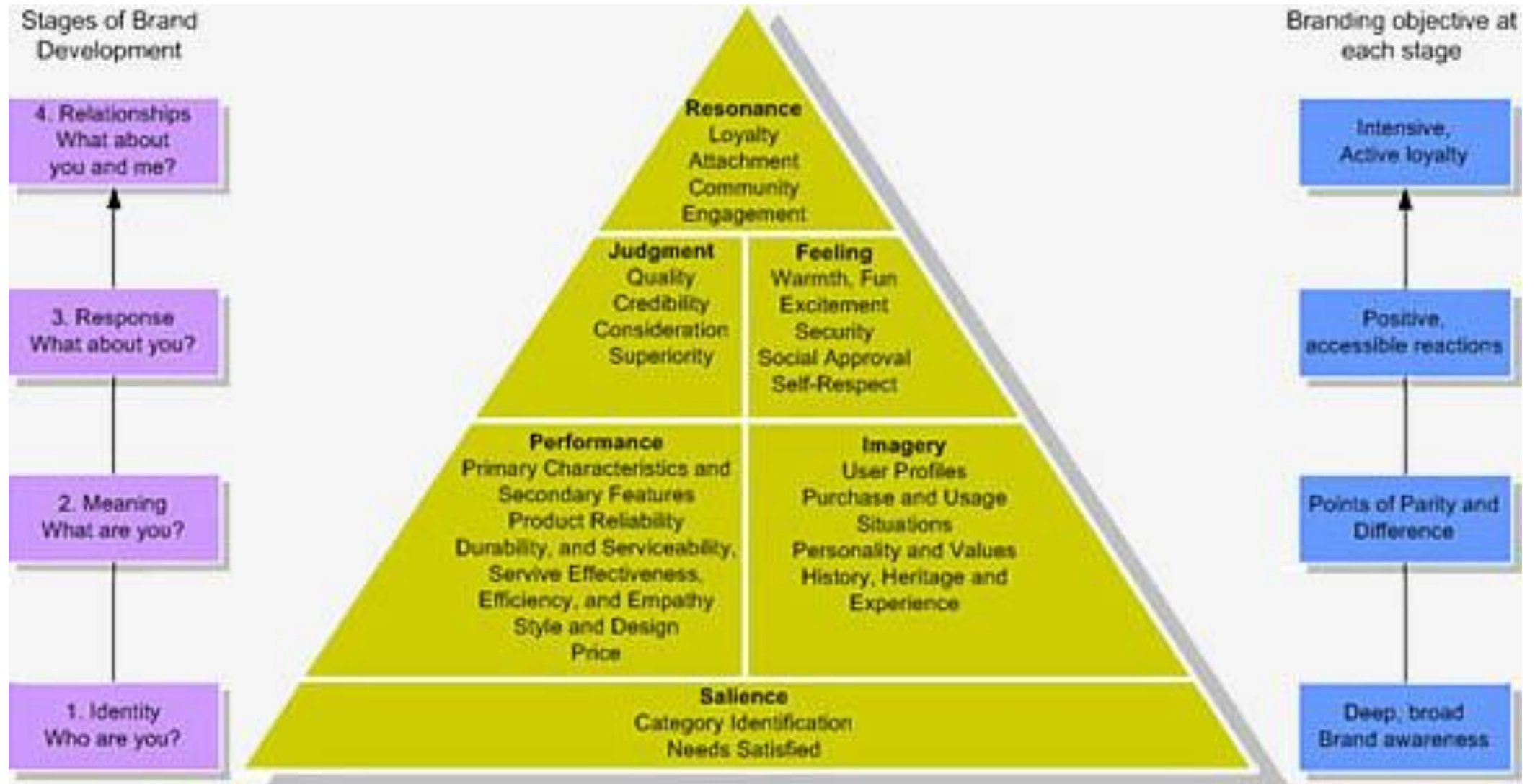
*% who say China's growing economy is a good thing for their country*

	2014	2017	2019	'14-'19 change
	%	%	%	
Mexico	38	—	64	▲ <b>26</b>
South Africa	41	—	64	▲ <b>23</b>
Philippines	30	48	47	▲ <b>17</b>
Brazil	39	—	55	▲ <b>16</b>
Nigeria	68	—	83	▲ <b>15</b>
Argentina	41	—	54	▲ <b>13</b>
Japan	47	53	55	▲ <b>8</b>
Turkey	24	—	31	▲ <b>7</b>
Lebanon	64	—	65	+1
U.S.	49	—	50	+1
Tunisia	66	—	66	0
Israel	62	—	61	-1
India	23	20	20	-3
South Korea	57	45	48	▼ <b>9</b>
Kenya	80	—	68	▼ <b>12</b>
Indonesia	55	49	40	▼ <b>15</b>
Australia	—	70	65	—
Canada	—	—	53	—

Note: Statistically significant differences shown in **bold**.

Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q41.

# Brand Resonance Pyramid Model





# Two-Way- Stretch Strategy

- The combination of :
  - Upward-stretch strategy and Downward-stretch strategy

How to  
marketers  
influence  
country-of-origin  
effects?

**COUNTRY  
OF ORIGIN**

# Recommendations

1. Enhance further the international relationship with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) participating countries
2. Promote Traditional Chinese culture (e.g., Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, etc.) in overseas
3. Expand International events and exchanges outside China
4. Increase International exchanged students, teachers, and scholars to China
5. Utilize the international opinion leaders/ celebrities to use social media to communicate with younger generation
6. Adopt the concept of “GLOCAL” mentality and attitude

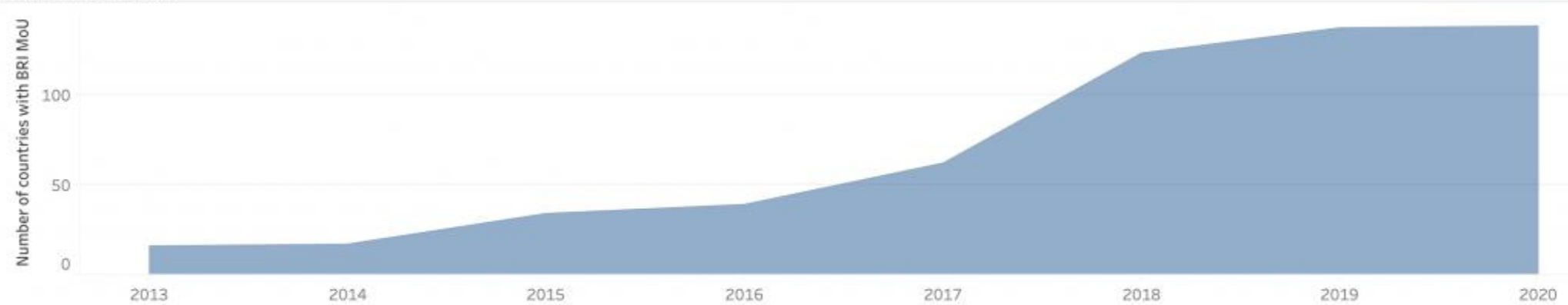
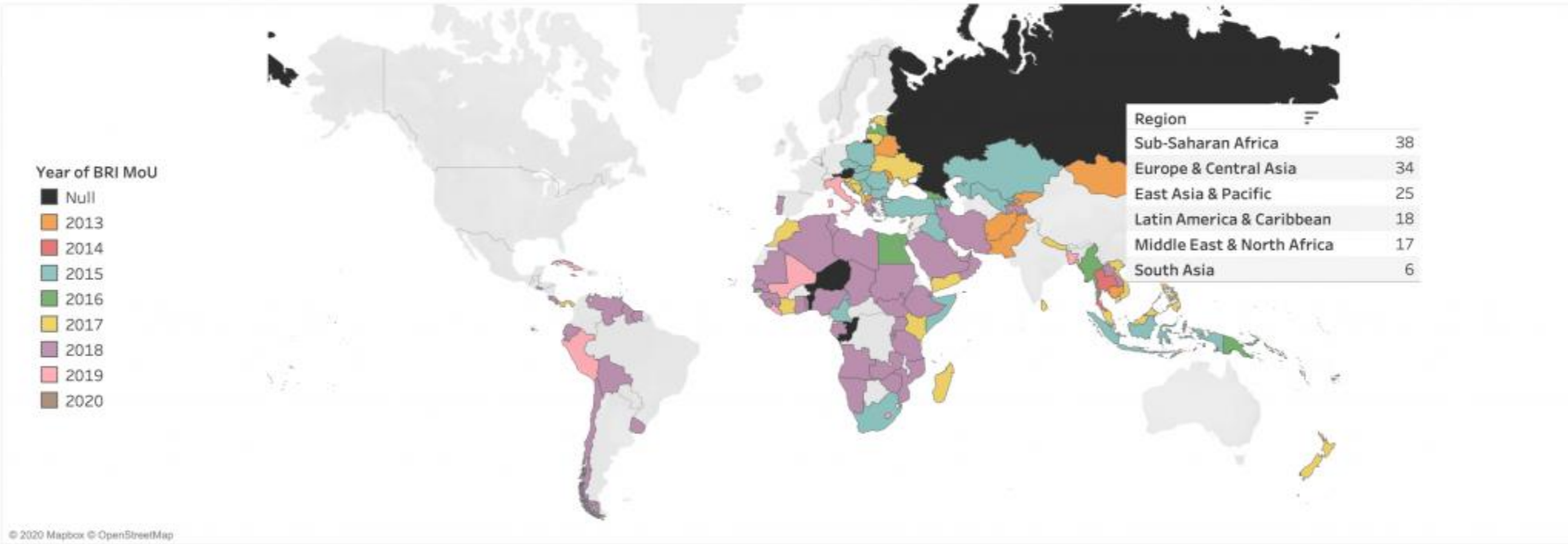
# 1. Enhance further the international relationship with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) participating countries

- As of March 2020, there are 138 countries have joint the BRI by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China.
- They are spread across all continents:
  - 38 BRI countries in Sub-Saharan Africa
  - 34 BRI countries in Europe & Central Asia (including 18 countries of EU)
  - 25 BRI countries in East Asia & Pacific
  - 17 BRI countries in Middle East & North Africa
  - 18 BRI countries in Latin America & Caribbean
  - 6 BRI countries in South East Asia
- Source: Green BRI Center

# Map of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by year: As of March 2020, 131 to 138 countries had joined the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by signing an MoU.

Source: Green BRI Center

Countries of the Belt and Road Initiative



## 2. Promote Traditional Chinese Culture (e.g., Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, etc.) in Overseas



- Chinese culture and civilization
- Confucianism : harmony, filial piety, good virtue
- Taoism : yin yang → balance, change (“I-Ching”)
- Buddhism : peace, karma, goodness
- Islam : peace, “Admiral Zheng He”
  - the Islamic Hadith mentioned, “Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China, for seeking knowledge is a duty on every Muslim,” Shaykh al-Albaani said in Da’eef al-Jaami’s
  - Islam in Xin Jiang



### 3. Expand International events and exchanges outside China

- Develop and promote Chinese culture thru events and festivals with host countries through **experiential activities or contests**. For example,
  - cooking, singing, sports, arts, music, drawing/painting, crafting, calligraphy, tai chi, tea ceremony, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Chinese Mandarin courses, Chinese knots, etc.

## 4. Increase International exchanged students, teachers, and scholars to China

- There are getting more non-Chinese students, teachers, and scholars visiting China for further learning and exploration
  - Eventually, **they will become the “bridge and ambassador”** between their countries and China directly and indirectly

## 5. Utilize the **international opinion leaders/ celebrities** to use social media to communicate with younger generation

- Those active and proactive local opinion leaders/celebrities have much broader networks and greater impacts on their opinions to the locals to improve local people's impression and views in China.
- They are also more delighted to have more followers in their social media exposure for higher attention, revenues, influences, etc.

## 6. Adopt the concept of “GLOCAL” mentality and attitude

- **GLOCAL** = “Think Globally, Act Locally”

Think globally  
Act locally

# References

- Green BRI Center (March 2020).
- Keller, K. L. (2013). Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity. Boston, USA, Pearson.
- Silver, L., Devlin, K. and Huang, C. (2019). China's Economic Growth Mostly Welcomed in Emerging Markets, but Neighbors Wary of Its Influence: U.S. still seen as world's leading economic power. *Pew Research Center*.

Q&A

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