

Women in Japan fight for their identity — starting with their name

Notes & Cues:**Article:**

Women in Japan are going through an identity crisis.

They're fighting to overturn a law that bars married couples from having different last names, which creates complications for women who have established careers and reputations.

Technically, men may take their wives' family name. Yet in practice, only about 4% do. Some women say they feel like they're wiping away their identity after getting married.

The issue came under the spotlight during the campaign for Sunday's upper house election, with opposition parties making gender equality a key part of their platform against Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and his ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

In a striking moment, Abe was the only person on a debate stage earlier this month who didn't raise his hand when asked about support for changing the law. His conservative party argues that the current law is equal to both men and women, and it's a matter of tradition.

"If you believe traditions are important, then there's no need to change the law," said Shigeharu Aoyama, an upper house LDP member.

Although Abe has ginned up support for "Womenomics" — the idea that more women working will help the overall economy — progress has been slow.

Summary: