

Private and Government Schools

English translation:

A: Also, do you only do English and Shona, do you do anything else, like French or like any other language, like African languages?

B: That's a good question. Actually we have Shona and English as the main languages in school, but for the southern part of the country, they study Ndebele instead of Shona, because we have two main languages in Zimbabwe. But Ndebele is spoken in the southern part of the country. So they do Ndebele and English. But at my school we didn't have any other languages, but I know that at more, like, group A schools, which are like more private schools that have more funding and they have the teachers who can teach French, they do have those subjects, but it's not very common for any other ordinary schools. Uh-huh, but I went to a boarding school, to a rural boarding school in Murewa. Also, that's something about our education system. We have either day-schools, which are usually government schools, and we have boarding schools, and boarding schools are schools where students stay at school, they live in dormitories just the way we live in college here, and you live far away from home, and it's a really, um, great way of just being away and being in school. Um, so you can go to boarding school and boarding schools are either church schools or private schools. They are owned by different churches. It can be Anglican, United Methodist—they are mission schools. They were founded by missionaries when they came um, to Africa, and boarding schools are really popular. So I went...

A: Is there, like, a big difference between public government-funded schools and private schools?

B: There is a huge difference, um, but also private can either be church, which is the mission of the boarding school, or really, really private. And also there is a big difference between the private-owned schools and the boarding schools¹. In terms of standards, the private schools have a higher standard, but boarding schools, sometimes they just seem like any other government um, ordinary school. Um, for the university system we also have government [schools]. The largest university is the University of Zimbabwe, which is government-owned. It was established right, um, during the federation, or right after Independence, and um there are also private universities, like the Africa University which is owned by a church—by United Methodist—and there is also Chinhoyi University of Technology. There is also Women's University in Africa, which is the, one of the few women's universities in Africa, and it's in Harare. And ah, the University of Zimbabwe takes most of the students for higher education, but in recent years the university has been deteriorating, so most, many, many students have been going to other private universities in the country, but they are very expensive, and therefore many more students have been

¹ Boarding school refers to schools that are not owned by private companies. Private schools can be boarding schools but they are not government-owned or religion affiliated.

going to South Africa, also other countries, for higher education because for South Africa there is a presidential scholarship, an annual presidential scholarship that students can apply for, and they can go work and live in South Africa, but at the same time it seems there are more and more universities that have been offering funding for Zimbabwean students. Um, it's either higher education in Zimbabwe is very tricky because of the funding and also because of the opportunities, but usually students just continue their interests from advanced level.

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