# PM Rishi Sunak's Push for Apprenticeships Sparks Debate on Education Value



Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has reiterated concerns about "low-value" university degrees, promising to replace them with 100,000 apprenticeships. Critics argue this perspective simplifies the complex valuation of education and could ignore the broader benefits of certain degrees, especially in fields seen as less economically rewarding, such as humanities and media studies.

Data indicates that dropout rates are higher in STEM fields, such as computer sciences and engineering, compared to languages and historical studies. Furthermore, the number of apprenticeship starts has fallen from 509,400 in 2015/16 to 337,100 in 2022/23, with only 54% of apprentices completing their training.

Critics also highlight the impact of socioeconomic background on educational outcomes. A study by Antony Moss of London South Bank University found that students from poorer backgrounds are less likely to complete their degrees or secure graduate-level jobs. The teaching excellence framework, aimed at improving educational quality, hasn't significantly reduced these inequalities.

The debate underscores a shift towards viewing education from an economic perspective, potentially overlooking its intrinsic value. For affluent students, education is seen as enriching, while for poorer students, it is viewed as a vocational necessity. This differentiation raises concerns about equitable education access and outcomes.