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**Lived Experience and Ambiguity: Reconstructing motherhood through the lens of Feminist Killjoy in Avni Doshi's *Burnt Sugar***

Avni Doshi's *Burnt Sugar* (2020) narrates the story of a mother who refuses self-abnegation of her desires for the sake of her child, Antara. The daughter witnesses the consequences of free will and her mother's choices, resulting in an existential crisis where she becomes obsessed with how the world perceives her. The novel oscillates between the daughter internalising the ideologies of patriarchy and acknowledging her mother's humanity. The suffering and shame of being treated as an outsider create a sense of alienation in the daughter. The narrative refuses to present a romanticised notion of motherhood. It offers motherhood as a liminal space where women must reconsider the boundaries between themselves and the child. Using Sara Ahmed's understanding of happiness as a result of submitting to socially sanctioned destinies of family and marriage, the paper questions the fates of women who refuse to accept them. The novel dances on the edges of abstract notions of motherhood inconsistent with embodied experiences of motherhood. The visceral language of the novel emphasises on maternal ambivalence. Simone de Beauvoir emphasises on motherhood as a choice. While the mother is intensely bound to her child, she is also an individual with free will. The novel deals with ambiguity by forcing the readers to see Tara as an individual and not just in the role of Antara's mother. Doshi's narrative framework reclaims the existence of mothers as beings with their desires, yearnings and choices and not just padlocked in the role of givers and nourishers.