The aim of this study is to describe and increase understanding of the nuances in the significance of confirmation and its essence from a caring science perspective. Using a hermeneutical concept exploration confirmation is described on an ontological level in order to increase understanding of its significance in caring. The overall research question of this study is: What is fundamentally meaningful in confirmation in caring science?

The theoretical perspective of this study emanates from the idea that caring’s innermost ethical foundation is the confirmation of human beings’ dignity. The human being is fundamentally holy. Human dignity implies accepting the human obligation of serving with love, and existing for the other. The fundamental aim of caring is alleviating suffering. In the drama of suffering, the human being seeks a co-actor to confirm his/her suffering.

The overall methodology of this study is a hermeneutic concept exploration including an ontological exploration. Eriksson’s model of concept development is used as both methodology and method in this study. The semantic analysis of the study emanates from Koot and Eriksson. A definition of the essence of confirmation occurs with the help of Grenholm’s method for content-based idea-analysis and the study material is comprised of selected works of fiction by Tove Jansson (the Moomin series).

The results of the study’s dictionary-based analysis show that the concept ‘confirm’ possesses the following main dimensions: confirm as relaying inner strength with the meaning dimensions "corroborate", “affirm”, “strengthen”, and “support”; confirm as instilling validity with the meaning dimensions “assure” and “agreeing to”; confirm as conveying credibility with the meaning dimensions “corroborate”, “affirm”, “witness”, “verify”, and “substantiate”. In the idea pattern emerging from the essence of confirmation, the resultant main theme includes seeing with veneration, the promise of connection, to practice one’s obligation, and a main idea pattern that is the idea of a bright existence. A dialogue between the main dimensions and idea patterns results in assumptions regarding the foundation of confirmation.

The foundation of confirmation is comprised of a multifaceted seeing. Seeing originates in the other human being’s face, in his/her gaze or eyes, which calls for seeing. Seeing implies understanding the need in the other’s face. When a person sees another’s need he/she is affected and overwhelmed by the other’s situation, which calls for him/her to respond. The other’s seeing calls for a seeing. Seeing is an all-penetrating power and a risk exists that such infringes upon the other. Thus, the foundation of a “drama of confirmation” is comprised of seeing so that one does not see or seeing so deeply that one cannot see. The purpose of a “drama of confirmation” is to always maintain or reinstate human dignity. To be affected by or overwhelmed by the lack of protection or defenselessness in another’s face entails stopping and preparing one’s self for answering the other. When a person does such, he/she selects the other while also providing a promise of a connection. Confirmation occurs in communion. It is confirming to have another to believe in and who never leaves. Essential to confirmation is that a human being is allowed to confirm and serve the other, with the other being confirmed in the light of ethos. Confirmation spreads light over the existence of the other, making it possible for the other to emerge and believe in his/her existence. The emergence of the other constitutes evidence that he/she has been confirmed.