<div align="center">**Constant Comparative Method Screencast Script**
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SLIDE 1 – Cover Slide/Introduction

- {Tap} Have you ever compared yourself to someone else? {Tap}
- Have you ever shopped around for a good deal by comparing prices on a big ticket item like a car or everyday items like groceries? {Tap}
- Have you compared apples to oranges? {Tap}
- Or what about the comparison of jelly bean flavors?

If you've done any type of comparison in your life, or just within the last 24 hours, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, you, or should I say we, have been comparing, which means to: *examine something in relation to something else*, or in other words, *to examine the character or qualities of something especially in order to discover resemblances or differences*. {Tap}

Hi! I'm Nekeisha and today, our chat relates to something we probably do instinctively every day. Let's talk about how comparison relates to research methodology, specifically in the form of the constant comparative method. {Tap}

SLIDE 2 – Screencast Objectives

We'll look its definition, history, process, and benefits and we'll review it as it was perceived by seminal authors. Hopefully, this will give a good foundation for those interested in digging deeper into how this method has evolved over time. {Tap}

SLIDE 3
Definition: What Is It?

The constant comparative method is a data analysis process and coding strategy that breaks data down into manageable pieces, allowing them to be compared for similarities and differences (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). More specifically, it's defined as {Tap}: "a method of analysis that generates successively more abstract concepts and theories through inductive processes" based on the comparison of {Tap} data with data, data with codes, codes with codes, codes with categories, categories with categories, and categories with concepts (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187). I know that sounded a little confusing, but as you can see, the constant comparative method involves "the systematic choice and study of several comparison groups" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 103). The method reflects characteristics attributed to its foundational origin - grounded theory. Grounded theorists, and qualitative researchers in general, are not simply interested in one category or pattern observed in data, but how a category or pattern may change dimensionally, which is found by invoking comparisons and seeing one pattern in relation to other patterns under various conditions (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). {Tap}

SLIDES 4 & 5
History: How Did It Originate?

Grounded theory, "the discovery of theory from data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 1), was introduced in a 1967 book {Tap} by sociologists Barney (*Glaze-r*) and Anselm Strauss; one had a qualitative inquiry background and the other had a quantitative inquiry background. At the time, some qualitative scholars advocated for systematic ways researchers could explain their analysis in publications; they desired the clarity that quantitative methods offered (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Thus, Glaser and Strauss introduced the constant comparative method to assist the qualitative analysis process (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007) specifically for theory generation and development. They agreed that comparison was useful for stating facts and verifying theoretical notions, but expressed that they were mostly interested in new categories, new ideas, and new theories rather than validating theories that already existed. I've noticed that most current published studies do not use constant comparative method to create new theory, but rather as a guide for general thematic analysis. However, this is still a reflection of grounded theory's influence on qualitative inquiry as a whole. {Tap}

Prior to Glaser and Strauss' (1967) introduction of grounded theory and its related analysis techniques, there were two ways scholars would analyze qualitative data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

1. First {Tap}, if scholars wanted to codify qualitative data, they would label data with codes and analyze the data to provide evidence for a previously generated hypothesis.
2. The second method {Tap} related only to those who wanted to generate ideas related to theory. Instead of coding, they would study the data for new characteristics and write memos about those observations to develop and redesign a developing theory.

Thus, Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative method was a third option {Tap} as they sought to combine the two aforementioned approaches. The constant comparative method used {Tap} "an analytic procedure of constant comparison [to combine] the explicit coding procedure of the first approach and the style of the theory development of the second" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 102). The first approach used coding to test, not discover, hypotheses. Like the constant comparative method, the second approach kept results close to the data; but, unlike the constant comparative method, it did not operationalize results in case they were to be tested using quantitative inquiry. The intention of the constant comparative method was not for two researchers to do the same technique and get the same results. Rather, it was designed to complement the flexibility and ambiguity of theory generation with discipline (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). {Tap}

SLIDES 6-10
Process: How Do We Do It?

Although there are variations to the constant comparative method, the original guidelines, as explained by Glaser and Strauss in 1967, consisted of 4 stages that informed one another: {Tap} (1) Comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the emerging theory, and (4) writing the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Remember, the process involves constantly comparing {Tap} data, codes, categories, and concepts and can relate to studies that aren't necessarily generating new theory. {Tap}

A. The method begins when the researcher {Tap} reviews the data and the situations (often referred to as incidents) presented by the data. This jumpstarts the comparison process. {Tap} Examples of comparisons include {Tap}:
- Comparisons between different people and situations
- Comparisons with the same person across time (e.g., in longitudinal studies)
- Or comparisons of observing an activity from one day to the next

B. Then, {Tap} labels (known as codes) are placed on incidents in an effort to create as many analytical categories as possible. Categories are the conceptual elements of a situation and become the conceptual elements of a theory (Dey, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). {Tap}

C. As incidents from data, which can be coded for more than one category by the way (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), are labeled, they're compared to previous codes and they're either placed in an existing category or they prompt the researcher to create a new category. It's important to note that different types of coding have been identified in research literature (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). However, in general, throughout this process, the researcher is constantly engaging with the comparison of data and codes to determine how they should be categorized. When data and codes that are similar are grouped together in a category, it refers to what they have in common conceptually, not necessarily that they represent a repeated action or incident (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

      i. Before going further, let's pause for an example: In Glaser and Strauss' (1967) research on those dying in hospitals, they noticed how nurses responded to the potential death of patients and how they perceived how someone's death would affect society. "He was so young," "He was to be a doctor," and "What will the children and her husband do without her" were some pieces of incident data that were compared and later grouped into a category called "social loss." Hopefully this example helps.

Oh and one more thing, because grounded theory and constant comparative method aren't out to prove the worth of existing theories, Glaser and Strauss (1967) concluded that it is okay if comparison causes negative, or dissimilar, cases to surface – that data should also be compared and taken into consideration.

D. Okay, getting back to our list {Tap}: Soon, theoretical characteristics of categories, referred to in the literature as either properties or concepts (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), begin to surface. Here, we'll refer to them as concepts just for better understanding. So, labels of concepts may be taken from the language of research participants or from words the researcher generates on their own. Overall, as explained by Dey (2007), categories "can achieve a higher level of abstraction through a process of 'constant comparison' which allows their theoretical elaboration and integration" (p. 168).

      ii. To see how concepts provide a higher level of abstraction, let's look back at our example: The dimensions of Glaser and Strauss' (1967) "social loss" category deepened. As they constantly compared elements of that category, they noticed that nurses saw some patients as a high social loss and others as a low social loss. This notion of putting people in high and

low loss dichotomies was a higher level abstract concept that emerged from the "social loss" category.

In summary, the first step of the constant comparative method helps one find the stories within data. {Tap}

Stage 2: Integrating categories and their properties/concepts

The second stage of the method involves "Integrating categories and their properties [or concepts]" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105). During this stage, the researcher begins making meaning of categorial comparisons. The process shifts from a focus on comparisons between incidents found in data to comparisons between categories and their dimensions, making the data, codes, categories, and concepts more integrated and unified than ever before. For example, go with me back to the "social loss" category {Tap}...The comparisons that created the category showed that nurses consistently re-calculated whether a patient would be a high social loss or a low social loss based on the visible and learned characteristics (such as age and education) associated with the patient (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). From then on, data that reminded them of the 'calculation' category was not compared to all other coded incidents in the general 'calculation' category but with [the category's concept of what they called] "accumulated knowledge on calculating" – (p. 108). {Tap}

Stage 3: Delimiting the theory

The constant comparative method's third stage, "Delimiting the theory," causes the task of data analysis and theory generation to not be so overwhelming and occurs on two levels (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105). In this stage {Tap}, delimiting, which means determining limits or boundaries, involves the levels of both theory and category. {Tap}

1) The researcher makes less and less adjustments to categories and concepts, helping the elements of theory become more solidified in scope and applicability (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). {Tap}
2) The researcher also reduces the original list of categories, making the analysis more selective and focused. Further comparisons of incidents to categories are easier and more intentional as the process causes the researcher to frame data findings within certain boundaries.

Eventually, {Tap} "delimiting a universe of data" forces a researcher to spend effort and time only on data relevant to the main theoretical categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 113). {Tap}

Stage 4: Writing the theory

The fourth stage of the constant comparative method involves "Writing the theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105). During this stage, the researcher processes all that has been coded and thought about as it relates to what has emerged from analyzing the data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) explain that {Tap} a researcher is ready to write and publish with confidence when he/she "is convinced that [the] analytic framework forms a systematic substantive theory, that it is a reasonably accurate statement of the matters studied, and that it is couched in a form that others going into the same field could use" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 113). {Tap}

SLIDE 11

Purpose & Benefits: Why Would We Do It?

The purpose of comparative analysis has several benefits. {Tap} It serves the purposes of having accurate evidence, producing empirical generalizations, verifying the components of a theory, and generating theory itself (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Even if a researcher isn't interested in creating new theory, with the constant comparative method, {Tap} researchers can let data findings emerge from data diversity and variation rather than forcing it to go a certain way (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The method also {Tap} buffers against overinterpreting qualitative data, seeking to find connections that possibly do not exist, and only looking for positive things to confirm what one already thinks (Dey, 2007). Additionally, {Tap} the method shows how elements of the continual data analysis process build upon each other and how comparisons made during each stage of analysis affect the entire analytic process (Charmaz, 2006).

The constant comparative method was designed to be integrated throughout the research process {Tap} (Charmaz, 2006; Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017); it affects other methodological areas such as the formation of literature reviews (Charmaz, 2006) and the direction of theoretical sampling (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and theoretical saturation (Charmaz, 2006; Morse, 2004). It also influences and is influenced by memo-writing (Charmaz, 2006). Lastly, in addition to interview data, the constant comparative method can be applied to other qualitative methods such as observation and document analysis. The type of comparisons made using the constant comparative method are vital to all analyses because of the useful and generative results produced when data are reduced to concepts (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Now, let's take a chance to review what we've chatted about today. {Pause to get video set-up on next slide} {Tap – start video and resume recording}

SLIDE 12 - Review

Instrumental music is playing from YouTube video. Voiceover Script:

The foundation of the constant comparative method originates from the grounded theory movement. It promotes taking pieces of data and examining them against other data from within and between incidents. This iterative, analytic strategy helps to determine if, and how, data are similar or different. Data form codes, codes are grouped into categories, and information from categories is abstracted to generate concepts. In the words of Kathy Charmaz (2006), "Comparisons...constitute each stage of analytic development" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187; SAGE Publications Ltd., 2017). So you see, constantly comparing data against itself helps in making necessary connections. Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that "...constant comparison causes the accumulated knowledge...to readily start to become integrated...resulting in a unified whole" (p. 109).

Thank you so much for tuning in to this screencast about the constant comparative method. {Tap}

SLIDE 13
Resources

If you'd like to *COMPARE* the foundational information you've heard today to what's currently found in the literature, {Tap} feel free to check out these resources... {Tap}

SLIDE 14 - Websites for Image Sources
{Tap}

...Thanks again {Tap}...

SLIDE 15 – Closing Slide (Duplicate of First Slide)
...and best wishes on your research adventure!