Intellectual Kessler Syndrome: When AI Generates Research Opportunities Faster Than Humans Can Resolve Them

George Kujo

Independent Researcher

Theoretical / conceptual article

Abstract

Generative artificial intelligence is rapidly reducing the cost of literature search, synthesis, hypothesis generation, data analysis, drafting, and research-question development. This paper examines a less discussed consequence: research opportunities may become easier to generate than to evaluate, reject, integrate, and complete.

I propose **Intellectual Kessler Syndrome**, a hypothesized regime in which investigating existing research questions recursively generates additional viable questions, causing unresolved research opportunities to accumulate faster than human researchers can close them. The concept differs from information overload, cognitive overload, project overload, and idea overload because the proliferation is endogenous: research activity itself creates further objects demanding attention.

Generative AI may amplify this process asymmetrically. It can expand external intellectual throughput while human attention, judgment, working memory, and available research time remain comparatively constrained. A stronger form of the hypothesis predicts a feedback loop in which a growing stock of unresolved, cognitively active opportunities increases attentional competition, task switching, or rumination and thereby reduces effective completion capacity.

The framework integrates work on AI-assisted scientific ideation, unfinished goals, project overload, scientific attention, idea selection, and the adjacent possible. It yields testable predictions about recursive question branching, unresolved-project accumulation, cognitive interference, and completion. The central implication is that generative AI may shift the scarce resource in science from question generation toward **question triage and completion**.

Keywords: generative AI; AI-assisted science; research ideation; question triage; scientific attention; science of science

1. From idea scarcity to opportunity abundance

Scientific creativity has traditionally been associated with formulating good questions. Generative artificial intelligence may change where the constraint lies.

Large language models can already synthesize literature, suggest hypotheses, propose experimental designs, identify conceptual connections, draft analyses, and generate candidate research questions. In a large-scale comparison involving more than 100 natural-language-processing researchers, AI-generated research ideas were judged significantly more novel than ideas generated by human experts, although they were rated somewhat lower in feasibility (Si, Yang, & Hashimoto, 2025). More recent benchmark work has made scientific idea generation itself an explicit target of model evaluation across dozens of models and scientific domains (Ruan et al., 2026).

End-to-end systems are also moving beyond isolated ideation to automate substantial parts of the research lifecycle (Lu et al., 2026). Yet reducing the cost of scientific work may not simply free time for deeper thinking.

AI increases the rate at which intellectual work can be externally processed. It does not proportionally increase the human researcher's capacity to understand, evaluate, prioritize, take responsibility for, and complete that work. Nor does it increase the number of hours available in a researcher's day.

A system that can generate ten plausible questions in the time previously required to generate one may create nine additional claims on attention rather than nine units of free time. The bottleneck may therefore move.

The traditional problem can be expressed as:

> How do we generate enough good research questions?

The emerging problem may become:

> Which of the many good research questions should we refuse to pursue?

This paper develops a theoretical framework for that transition.

The human-behaviour question is not whether AI can think independently, but how people allocate finite attention and commitment when machines dramatically enlarge the menu of plausible intellectual actions. The framework therefore treats AI-augmented research as a problem of metacognitive control, selective attention, and stopping decisions under opportunity abundance.

2. The asymmetry of AI-augmented research

Generative AI can increase several forms of research throughput simultaneously, from literature synthesis and coding to alternative analyses and adjacent-literature discovery. Each can enlarge the set of possibilities visible to an investigator. Human cognitive throughput is less elastic.

Researchers retain finite attention, bounded working memory, limited executive capacity, and a fixed amount of discretionary research time. AI can offload retrieval, computation, memory, and parts of planning, but final judgments still require some combination of comprehension, prioritization, responsibility, and sustained commitment.

The asymmetry can be summarized as:

Machine-assisted intellectual throughput ↑↑

$$\textit{while human evaluative capacity} \approx \textit{constrained}$$

$$\textit{and available research time} \approx \textit{constrained.}$$

This does not imply that human cognition is literally unchanged by AI. External tools can increase effective capacity. Cognitive offloading research shows that people can use external reminders and tools to relieve memory demands, and recent computational work frames offloading itself as a value-based allocation of limited internal memory capacity (Gilbert, 2024). The narrower claim is that the generation and preliminary processing of candidate intellectual objects may expand substantially faster than the human capacity for final judgment and sustained commitment.

Scientific questions are not ordinary computational outputs. Someone still has to judge importance, assumptions, tractability, evidential adequacy, and whether a project deserves sustained attention.

As AI makes possible intellectual work cheaper, **selection and completion may become more expensive in relative terms**.

3. What existing concepts explain - and what they do not

The proposed problem sits near several established concepts, but adds a dynamic they do not by themselves capture.

3.1 Information overload

Information overload concerns input volume exceeding processing capacity. Here, processing one research problem can itself generate several new research problems; overload is partly **endogenous**.

3.2 Cognitive overload

Cognitive-load approaches explain impaired performance under excessive demand, but not why the objects demanding attention may reproduce through being addressed.

3.3 Project overload

Research on multi-project work is particularly close. Zika-Viktorsson, Sundstrom, and Engwall (2006) described project overload in environments characterized by tight schedules, multitasking, coordination costs, and substantial setup time when alternating between projects.

Project overload ordinarily begins with an already large portfolio. The present proposal adds a generative mechanism:

> **projects create candidate projects.**

A literature search for Project A may reveal Project B; a subgroup pattern may create C; a reviewer objection may expose D; exploring B may then generate E, F, and G. The stock of research opportunities is therefore not fixed.

3.4 Idea overload and question selection

AI research already recognizes selection pressure. Bell et al. (2026) describe "idea overload" in innovation. A recent preprint, HybridQuestion (Zhao, Xu, Li, & Liu, arXiv:2602.03849; https://arxiv.org/abs/2602.03849), likewise uses AI to generate scientific questions with increasing human oversight for final selection. Thus, abundance and the importance of screening are not novel claims.

The present framework adds a specific dynamic claim: candidate questions can proliferate **recursively across generations**, while the accumulating stock of unresolved but still cognitively active opportunities may reduce effective completion capacity. The proposed novelty is therefore not abundance or selection difficulty alone, but a possible feedback between opportunity generation and opportunity closure.

3.5 Scientific attention

Attention has long been recognized as a scarce resource in science. Franck (2002) described science as an industry transforming attention into cognitive output and argued that misallocation of time and effort is relevant to the rationality of scientific production.

AI intensifies this allocation problem because it can enlarge the set of apparently worthy objects competing for that scarce attention.

The relevant scarcity may therefore shift from access to information or ideas toward **allocative judgment and completion capacity**.

4. The adjacent possible - and what happens when it expands too fast

The **adjacent possible** provides a useful bridge: new combinations of existing knowledge open further reachable possibilities, including an "epistemic adjacent possible" in experimental science (Bollhagen, 2026). A complementary question follows:

> What happens when the adjacent possible expands faster than an investigator can traverse it?

Scientific progress often creates new uncertainty: findings raise mechanism questions, null results raise measurement questions, contradictions invite replication, and policy implications create governance questions. Resolving one question can reveal several more.

Generative AI reduces the historical friction of search, synthesis, and alternative generation. The adjacent possible becomes easier to inspect - valuable, but potentially making non-pursuit harder.

5. Intellectual Kessler Syndrome

I propose the term **Intellectual Kessler Syndrome** for a hypothesized regime in which investigating existing research opportunities generates further viable opportunities faster than a human investigator can evaluate, reject, integrate, or complete them, and in which the resulting unresolved stock may itself impede closure.

The analogy is with the Kessler syndrome in orbital environments, where interactions among existing objects can generate additional debris and thereby increase the probability of further interactions. The analogy should not be pushed literally. Research questions are not physical objects, scientific creativity is not a collision process, and no irreversibility is assumed.

For the term to do analytical work rather than serve as a metaphor, three conditions should be present:

1. **Recursive generation:** investigating one opportunity creates additional viable opportunities across more than one generation;
2. **Generation-resolution imbalance:** new viable opportunities are generated faster than they are completed, rejected, integrated, or deliberately parked; and
3. **Stock-dependent closure cost:** a larger stock of unresolved, cognitively active opportunities reduces effective completion capacity through attentional competition, switching, rumination, or related mechanisms.

The third condition is the strongest and least established. Without it, the phenomenon is better described as research-opportunity overload rather than a Kessler-like self-reinforcing regime.

The useful common feature is therefore not simple abundance but **endogenous proliferation plus feedback**. In ordinary overload models, the investigator receives more objects than can be processed. Here, processing the objects contributes to producing new objects, while the accumulating active stock may make closure progressively harder.

For scientific research, the minimal structure is:

Research question A -> investigation of A -> discovery of B, C, and D -> investigation of B -> discovery of E, F, and G -> continued expansion of unresolved research possibilities.

The phenomenon becomes important when the rate of generation persistently exceeds the rate of resolution.

Let U_t denote the stock of unresolved research opportunities at time t. A simple accounting identity is:

$$U(t+1) = U(t) + G(t) - C(t)$$

where G_t is the number or weighted value of research opportunities generated, and C_t is the number or weighted value of research opportunities completed, rejected, integrated, parked with sufficient cognitive closure, or otherwise resolved.

When

$$G(t) > C(t)$$

over sustained periods, unresolved opportunities accumulate.

AI matters if it increases G_t substantially faster than it increases C_t.

The framework does not require every generated idea to become a formal project. A research opportunity becomes costly before project initiation if the investigator continues to treat it as something potentially worth pursuing.

The relevant stock is therefore broader than "active projects." It consists of **unclosed intellectual commitments**.

6. From accumulation to self-reinforcing accumulation

Accumulation alone would produce a queueing or portfolio-management problem. A stronger hypothesis is that the queue itself can reduce processing capacity.

Research on unfinished goals provides a plausible mechanism. Masicampo and Baumeister (2011a) found across five studies that unfulfilled goals could interfere with later tasks requiring executive functions. In a separate series of studies, forming specific plans reduced intrusive thoughts and cognitive interference associated with unfinished goals, suggesting that full task completion is not always required for cognitive closure (Masicampo & Baumeister, 2011b).

More recent work-recovery evidence is consistent with persistent activation outside the focal work period. A 2026 meta-analysis found that unfinished work tasks were positively associated with work-related thoughts during off-job time, with population correlations of .382 at the between-person level and .247 at the within-person level; associations were strongest for affective rumination (Wendsche, Weigelt, & Syrek, 2026).

These findings do not establish that unfinished research ideas impair scientific performance, and a remembered research possibility may differ substantially from an active unfinished goal. They justify a testable mechanism only for unresolved opportunities that retain goal relevance or psychological commitment.

If unresolved research questions maintain goal activation, encourage rumination, promote repeated task switching, or compete for attention, then accumulation of research opportunities may reduce the effective capacity available for completing focal work. This mechanism is also consistent with research on attention residue: switching away from one work task can leave cognitive activity focused on the prior task, with subsequent performance suffering when disengagement is incomplete (Leroy, 2009). Diary studies likewise link unfinished tasks to rumination and impaired recovery or sleep (Syrek et al., 2017; Wendsche et al., 2026).

The proposed feedback loop is therefore:

AI assistance -> higher opportunity-generation rate -> larger stock of unresolved questions -> greater attentional competition / goal persistence / switching -> lower effective completion capacity -> further accumulation of unresolved questions.

The critical mechanism is not merely:

> too many ideas.

It is:

> **more unresolved ideas -> lower ability to finish -> still more unresolved ideas.**

This feedback is the feature that makes the Kessler analogy analytically useful rather than merely rhetorical.

7. AI as an amplifier rather than the original cause

Intellectual Kessler Syndrome does not require generative AI. Researchers have always generated new questions from existing work. That recursive property is one of the engines of science.

AI changes the scale, speed, and transaction costs.

The same researcher can now ask a model to identify weaknesses in a paper, propose alternative mechanisms, search adjacent disciplines, generate counterarguments, suggest datasets, construct study designs, and compare each option with an expanding literature. Human-LLM systems such as Scideator already show this expansion empirically: in a within-subjects study of 19 computer-science researchers, participants identified more interesting scientific ideas using an LLM-assisted recombination tool than with a strong search-plus-LLM baseline (Radensky et al., 2026). More generally, five experiments reported that ChatGPT assistance increased the creativity of generated ideas relative to no technology or conventional web search (Lee & Chung, 2024).

Within a short period, an investigator can acquire a portfolio that previously would have taken much longer to identify. AI therefore **reduces the transaction cost of curiosity**, removing frictions that once kept marginal possibilities from competing for attention.

The increased accessibility of the adjacent possible can therefore produce a paradox:

> **AI makes intellectual exploration cheaper while making intellectual commitment harder.**

The distinction is also supported by emerging evidence of an ideation-execution gap. Si, Hashimoto, and Yang (2026) recruited 43 expert researchers to execute randomly assigned human- or LLM-generated ideas, with each researcher spending more than 100 hours on execution. The initial advantage of LLM ideas at the ideation stage diminished after execution, and human ideas often ranked higher on aggregated post-execution evaluations. The result suggests that generating an attractive candidate and converting that candidate into successful research are distinct bottlenecks.

Intellectual Kessler Syndrome concerns what happens when candidate generation becomes cheap while execution remains scarce.

8. From question generation to question triage

If the framework is correct, an important scientific skill changes in relative value.

The ability to generate research questions remains important. But when candidate questions become cheap, the scarce competence becomes the ability to distinguish among them.

I refer to this as **question triage**.

Question triage concerns a real allocation problem rather than a rhetorical one. Survey evidence from 409 public-affairs researchers suggests that project choice reflects multiple motives - including intellectual interest, societal importance, and personal gain - that do not collapse into a single criterion of scientific merit (Nelson, 2024). In an AI-expanded opportunity space, such choices become more frequent and consequential.

Question triage includes at least four decisions:

1. **Pursue** - the question warrants dedicated investigation.
2. **Integrate** - the question belongs inside an existing project rather than becoming a new project.
3. **Park** - the question is worth preserving but should not remain cognitively active.
4. **Abandon** - the question may be interesting, novel, and feasible but does not justify scarce research capacity.

The fourth category may become particularly important: in an environment of machine-generated possibility abundance, deliberate refusal can become a form of expertise.

A researcher may correctly conclude: *This question is novel, feasible, and interesting - and I still should not pursue it.* That is allocation under scarcity.

Question triage concerns opportunity cost: each new project displaces deeper work elsewhere.

This leads to a central implication:

> **In the age of generative AI, the scarce intellectual resource may no longer be the ability to generate questions, but the judgment to decide which questions deserve sustained human attention.**

Selection itself is not the novelty. The contribution is to explain *why selection pressure may become structurally stronger*: opportunities can proliferate recursively while completion capacity remains constrained and may itself be degraded by unresolved commitments.

9. Testable predictions

The framework yields empirical hypotheses.

H1. Generative amplification

Researchers using generative AI will identify more viable derivative research questions from a common seed problem than researchers using conventional research tools alone.

Independent evaluators should assess relevance, novelty, feasibility, and redundancy.

H2. Multi-generational branching

The distinctive signature is not first-generation ideation but recursive branching. If participants investigate one derivative question, AI-assisted participants should generate a larger second generation of viable questions. Repeating this process would permit estimation of an intellectual branching factor.

H3. Unresolved-opportunity accumulation

AI-assisted researchers will end research sessions or project cycles with a larger stock of unresolved but still valued research possibilities, unless explicit triage mechanisms are imposed.

H4. Cognitive interference

A larger stock of unresolved, cognitively active research opportunities will predict more intrusive research-related thoughts, subjective cognitive load, or switching among projects.

H5. Completion penalty

Holding task complexity constant, researchers managing larger unresolved, cognitively active opportunity stocks will take longer to complete or commit to a focal research output; experimental manipulation would be required to establish that the stock itself causes the delay.

H6. Triage as moderator

Explicit triage procedures - forced ranking, abandonment rules, external project repositories, work-in-progress limits, or precommitted capacity ceilings - will weaken the relationship between AI-assisted idea generation and unresolved-opportunity accumulation.

10. A possible experimental design

A first experiment could test the early stages of the model.

Participants with research experience would receive the same seed research question. One group would use conventional search and research tools. A second group would receive access to a generative-AI research assistant.

During a fixed exploration period, participants would record every derivative research question they consider independently viable. Blinded reviewers would rate the questions for novelty, importance, feasibility, and redundancy.

Participants would then select one derivative question and conduct a second exploration phase. The number and quality of second-generation questions would provide an estimate of recursive branching.

Additional outcomes could include:

- number of unresolved questions retained;
- time spent switching between alternatives;
- confidence in priority ranking;
- perceived cognitive load;
- intrusive thoughts after the task;
- completion of the focal assignment;
- willingness to abandon attractive questions.

A longitudinal extension could log project generation and closure over several months.

A provisional research branching-and-closure ratio could be written as:

$$Ridea = Ngenerated / Nresolved$$

The epidemiological analogy is descriptive only. Because raw counts can be inflated by redundant or trivial questions, empirical use would require a preregistered threshold for viability and blinded ratings of redundancy, feasibility, and importance.

When Ridea < 1, unresolved opportunities tend to contract. When Ridea = 1, the stock is approximately stable. When Ridea > 1, opportunities proliferate faster than they are closed.

The stronger Intellectual Kessler hypothesis predicts not merely Ridea > 1, but that increasing unresolved stock may itself depress the denominator.

11. Implications for research institutions

The problem may scale beyond individuals. If AI lowers the cost of generating manuscripts, hypotheses, analyses, reviews, and proposals, editorial systems, reviewers, funders, and laboratories may all face larger volumes of superficially plausible work.

End-to-end AI research systems have themselves raised concern that automated generation could add noise to the scientific literature and increase pressure on already burdened review systems (Lu et al., 2026).

Institutions may therefore need to track not only idea generation and project initiation, but project closure, abandonment quality, portfolio size, and work-in-progress.

Existing incentives reward initiation and output more visibly than early, correct abandonment. AI may make that imbalance increasingly expensive.

12. Implications for scientific training

Research training emphasizes how to formulate questions; future training may also need to teach rejection, opportunity-cost estimation, limits on concurrent work, and cognitive closure. The relevant ideal is **disciplined curiosity**.

An AI system can always produce another mechanism, robustness check, adjacent literature, subgroup, or manuscript. At some point the rational act is to stop.

13. Limits of the proposal

Intellectual Kessler Syndrome is a conceptual hypothesis, not an established psychological or clinical syndrome.

Several alternatives must be considered.

First, AI may increase completion capacity as much as or more than it increases opportunity generation. Increasingly autonomous research systems could eventually resolve many of the opportunities they generate, weakening the human bottleneck.

Second, cognitive offloading may allow researchers to store unresolved questions without maintaining meaningful attentional activation. The relationship between unresolved intellectual opportunities and cognitive interference therefore requires direct testing.

Third, greater opportunity abundance may improve science even if many ideas remain unfinished. A larger search space can increase the probability of discovering high-value questions.

Fourth, not all derivative questions are independent or valuable. AI systems may generate redundant, trivial, or infeasible alternatives. Apparent proliferation can therefore overestimate true scientific opportunity.

Fifth, existing research on idea overload, question selection, portfolio management, and unfinished goals overlaps with important components of this framework. The proposed novelty lies in integrating these components into a recursive dynamic model of research-opportunity generation and completion rather than claiming that abundance, selection difficulty, or unfinished-task effects are new phenomena individually.

The Kessler analogy is therefore a model-generating device, not a claim that science has entered an irreversible pathological state. If recursive generation occurs without stock-dependent impairment of closure, the stronger Kessler label would not be warranted. The empirical question is whether AI changes the balance between generation and resolution, and under what behavioural conditions that imbalance becomes self-reinforcing.

14. Conclusion

Generative AI may accelerate science, but acceleration does not guarantee convergence.

A technology that makes literature, hypotheses, analyses, and research questions cheaper to generate may simultaneously increase the number of intellectual objects demanding human judgment.

Human attention, research time, commitment, and responsibility remain scarce. The defining problem may therefore shift.

The challenge may no longer be primarily how to produce enough plausible questions. It may be how to prevent plausible questions from consuming the capacity required to answer the best ones.

> **Generative AI may change the bottleneck of science from question generation to question selection and completion.**

If so, the ability to abandon a research question may become as important as the ability to generate one.

The central skill of the AI-augmented researcher will not be limitless ideation. It will be metacognitive control over abundance: deciding what deserves continued attention, what can be cognitively closed, and when further exploration has negative opportunity value.

It will be knowing where to stop.

Statements and Declarations

Funding

No funds, grants, or other support was received for the preparation of this manuscript.

Competing interests

The author declares no financial or non-financial competing interests directly related to this work.

Data availability

No original dataset was generated or analysed for this conceptual article.

Author contribution

George Kujo conceived the conceptual framework, developed the argument and model, conducted and verified the literature review, and wrote and revised the manuscript.

Use of generative AI

OpenAI ChatGPT was used during manuscript development to assist with literature discovery, structural organization, drafting, and language refinement. The author independently evaluated the sources, verified factual claims and references, substantially revised the manuscript, and takes full responsibility for the content.

References

Bell, J. J., Pescher, C., Tellis, G. J., & Fuller, J. (2026). Smarter idea selection: Turning idea overload into innovation advantage. *NIM Marketing Intelligence Review, 18*(1), 42-47. https://doi.org/10.2478/nimmir-2026-0007

Bollhagen, A. (2026). Creativity and practical underdetermination: How experimental science steps into the epistemic adjacent possible. *Biological Theory, 21*, 133-148. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13752-025-00518-3

Franck, G. (2002). The scientific economy of attention: A novel approach to the collective rationality of science. *Scientometrics, 55*(1), 3-26. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016059402618

Gilbert, S. J. (2024). Cognitive offloading is value-based decision making: Modelling cognitive effort and the expected value of memory. *Cognition, 247*, 105783. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2024.105783

Lee, B. C., & Chung, J. (2024). An empirical investigation of the impact of ChatGPT on creativity. *Nature Human Behaviour, 8*, 1906-1914. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-024-01953-1

Leroy, S. (2009). Why is it so hard to do my work? The challenge of attention residue when switching between work tasks. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 109*(2), 168-181. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2009.04.002

Lu, C., Lu, C., Lange, R. T., Yamada, Y., Hu, S., Foerster, J., Ha, D., & Clune, J. (2026). Towards end-to-end automation of AI research. *Nature*. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-026-10265-5

Masicampo, E. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2011a). Unfulfilled goals interfere with tasks that require executive functions. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 47*(2), 300-311. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2010.10.011

Masicampo, E. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2011b). Consider it done! Plan making can eliminate the cognitive effects of unfulfilled goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 101*(4), 667-683. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024192

Nelson, J. P. (2024). The micro-dynamics of scientific choice: Research project motivations among public affairs academics. *Science and Public Policy, 51*(1), 149-161. https://doi.org/10.1093/scipol/scad059

Radensky, M., Shahid, S., Fok, R., Siangliulue, P., Hope, T., & Weld, D. S. (2026). Scideator: Human-LLM compound system for scientific ideation through facet recombination and novelty evaluation. Proceedings of the ACM Conference on AI and Agentic Systems (CAIS 2026), 348–374. https://doi.org/10.1145/3786335.3813161

Ruan, K., Wang, X., Hong, J., Wang, P., Liu, Y., & Sun, H. (2026). Evaluating LLMs' divergent thinking capabilities for scientific idea generation with minimal context. *Nature Communications, 17*, 3625. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-026-70245-1

Si, C., Yang, D., & Hashimoto, T. (2025). Can LLMs generate novel research ideas? A large-scale human study with 100+ NLP researchers. International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR 2025).

https://proceedings.iclr.cc/paper_files/paper/2025/hash/ea94957d81b1c1caf87ef5319fa6b467-Abstract-Conference.html

Si, C., Hashimoto, T., & Yang, D. (2026). The ideation-execution gap: Execution outcomes of LLM-generated versus human research ideas. International Conference on Learning Representations (ICLR 2026). https://iclr.cc/virtual/2026/poster/10010564

Syrek, C. J., Weigelt, O., Peifer, C., & Antoni, C. H. (2017). Zeigarnik's sleepless nights: How unfinished tasks at the end of the week impair employee sleep on the weekend through rumination. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 22*(2), 225-238. https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000031

Wendsche, J., Weigelt, O., & Syrek, C. J. (2026). Unfinished work tasks and work-related thoughts during off-job time: Meta-analysis of the Zeigarnik effect in a work-recovery context. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping, 39*(4), 385-407. https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2026.2616302

Zika-Viktorsson, A., Sundstrom, P., & Engwall, M. (2006). Project overload: An exploratory study of work and management in multi-project settings. *International Journal of Project Management, 24*(5), 385-394. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2006.02.010