This illustration shows an example of the ways in which bodies of scholarly literature intersect. This researcher identified scholarly literature on organizational motivation, external environment, organizational capacity, and organizational performance, all of which related to the proposed research topic of organizational performance. The researcher then identified the intersection of these major topics, as well as the subtopics. Then the researcher reviewed and synthesized all the literature, determining agreement and disagreement among various authors on specific topics, as well as describing ways in which the topics relate to one another and to the focus of the proposed research topic—organizational performance. As an example, perhaps the literature on organizational capacity focused on for-profit organizations, and the proposed research is on organizational performance in a public agency. In that case, the researcher would indicate what studies were relevant in a different sector, and how that work might apply in or be different from the other sector. This is a way to identify gaps in the literature, although that is not sufficient in and of itself to identifying the problem that makes the study important to conduct.
Similar to the previous illustration that may depict the intersection among various bodies of scholarly literature, this diagram shows the overlap among topics related to *types of engagement* in the use of social media platforms for online marketing to customers. This model provides a similar way to conceptualize and visualize related topics and their relationship with the main topic of research.

Reference:
Reference:

This diagram is one form of “mind map,” a visual thinking tool that can be used to explore a topic or to diagram the scholarly literature and synthesis related to a research topic. The central idea in the illustration is improving work practices in times of change, which is represented by the intersection of publics, media & participatory culture; social network sites; and organizational identity. Each of the central circles branches into related topics that may represent the related literature. Often, with the use of a visual tool such as a mind map, a researcher may organize the relationship of topics and sort the relative importance of each. Mind maps may be created, either on a computer or by hand; it is helpful to personalize your mind map by creating a central idea, adding branches and keywords, color-coding branches, and including images. An Internet search will show many links to mind mapping examples and guidance.
Another tool to map visually a literature review and synthesis is shown here as questions to ask regarding the process. This helpful model can serve as a process checklist, after which you might use a mind map on issues related to your research topic.
This Ecological Framework on risk factors in violence prevention depicts another model used to visualize relationships among bodies of literature by topic and subtopic. The individual oval is depicted above as a part of the relationship oval, which, in turn, is a part of community, which is a part of the societal oval. For each topic-oval, a box lists the risk factors that relate to one of four major topics. This may be thought of as a depiction of topics and subtopics, which may translate to a research question and subquestions.

Reference: