Google, Facebook, and many other widely used software platforms have been accused of using algorithms that present biased search results or news feeds. Should such platforms be bias free (at least as much as possible), or is it acceptable for platforms to reflect the biases of the developers? Explain.

Step 1: Answer

Yes.

Step 2: Explanation

Every internet search engine uses a set of rules known as an algorithm to choose the results that best match your search and arrange them in the order you want to see them. These algorithms are a reflection of the implicit or overt prejudices of the programmers. We refer to this as "algorithmic bias." Businesses like Google have the power to alter their algorithms, but when and how to do so are morally debatable decisions that also reveal prejudice.

Your own subconscious and explicit biases are reflected in your search results as well.

You'll typically find more results supporting a particular point of view if you utilise keywords that support that point of view. Additionally, search engine algorithms employ information about you acquired from your online activities, just as the algorithms that govern your social media feeds. As a result, even though you ran the same query, your results were different from others'! Your gender, age, geography, and other personal factors influence them, as does the stuff you've previously liked or clicked on. Your search results and social media feeds may tend to represent a particular point of view if you frequently like and click on stuff that supports it.

Popular terminology for this phenomena is "filter bubble." By isolating people from opposing viewpoints, filter bubbles may cause polarisation.

Remember that sponsored content (advertisements) that are also tailored to you are frequently included in search engine results and that it may be challenging to distinguish them from real search results.