

The Manosphere: How a Pro-Gender Ideology is presented in Google's and Bing's Search Results

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Background and Introduction

Search engines serve as society's primary information retrieval systems (Haider & Sundin, 2019). However, search engine companies are **profit-oriented** and tailor their products to users' search habits (Tripodi, 2022), potentially leading to **biased search algorithms** on important topics such as race (Noble, 2018), gender (Noble, 2018; Otterbacher et al., 2017), politics (Epstein & Robertson, 2015) and health information (White & Horvitz, 2009). This study will analyze search results from **Google** and **Bing** to explore and compare how they present prevalent queries related to **the Manosphere**, an online community focused on helping men navigate life and addressing **pro-male ideology** (Ging, 2019; Haslop et al., 2024).

Research questions

RQ1: What types of popular domain are displayed by Google and Bing when searching for queries related to the Manosphere in the US and Germany?

RQ2: How do Google and Bing present their popular unique search results when searching for queries about the Manosphere in the US and in Germany?

RQ3: How do Google and Bing present viewpoints in popular search results when searching for queries about the Manosphere in the US and in Germany?

Methods

The study analysed and compared search results from **Google** and **Bing** from **the US** and **Germany**. The generated list of queries consisting of 391 queries for the US and 79 for Germany using the **Query Sampler** (Schultheiß et al., 2023) were extracted from a list of popular terms used in the Manosphere. I then used the **Result Assessment Tool**, or **RAT** (Lewandowski & Sünkler, 2019) to scrape the search results, collecting 60804 results in the US and 10645 in Germany. **Popular and unique sources** of each search engine were then separated. I calculated the source distribution score using the Gini coefficient (Gini, 1936) and the similarity rate using the Jaccard index (González et al., 2008). To examine the viewpoints of results, I manually selected the **50 most appeared results** from each search engine and rated them based on a 7-point scale from -3 (Strongly Opposing) to 3 (Strongly Supporting) (Draws et al., 2023).

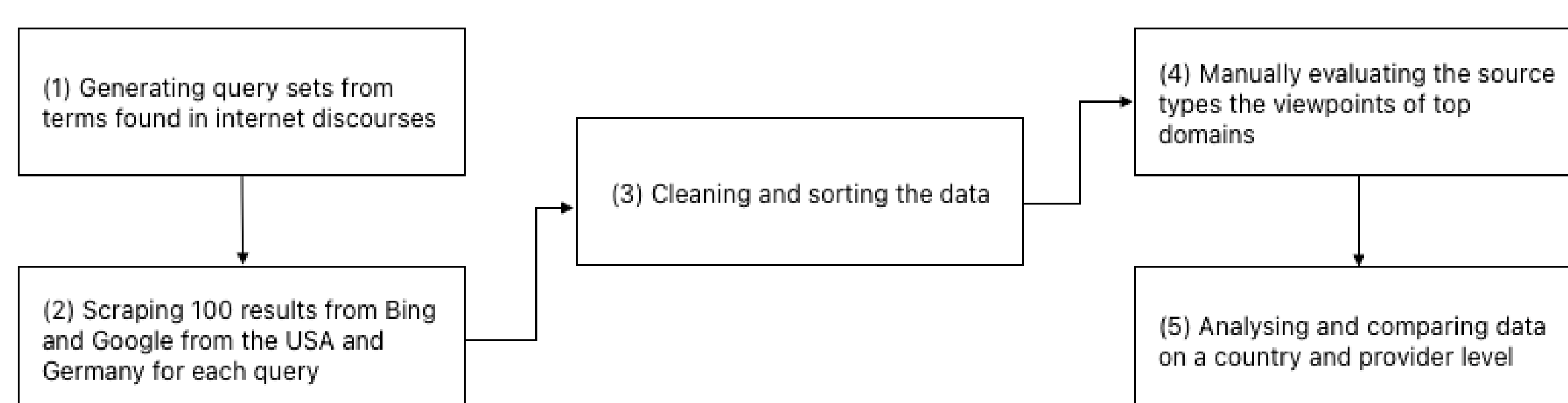


Figure 1: Methodology of the study

Results

The comparison popular results on Google and Bing shows a **22% overlap** in the top 50 positions and slightly **lower overlap in the top 10 positions**. The Gini coefficient analysis indicates that **Google search results are more unevenly distributed** in both the US and Germany compared to Bing. Additionally, **"Self-help Platform"** is the most prevalent source type in Bing, while Google presents its results more evenly (RQ1).

The cumulative number of the top 10 unique search results shows that **Bing displayed more unique domains than Google** in both the US and Germany. In the US, **half** of Bing's unique sources were from **self-help platforms**, while Google had a mix of **social media, online magazines, and self-help platforms**. In Germany, **self-help platforms** were the **most prominent unique source** in both Bing (45%) and Google (21%) (RQ2).

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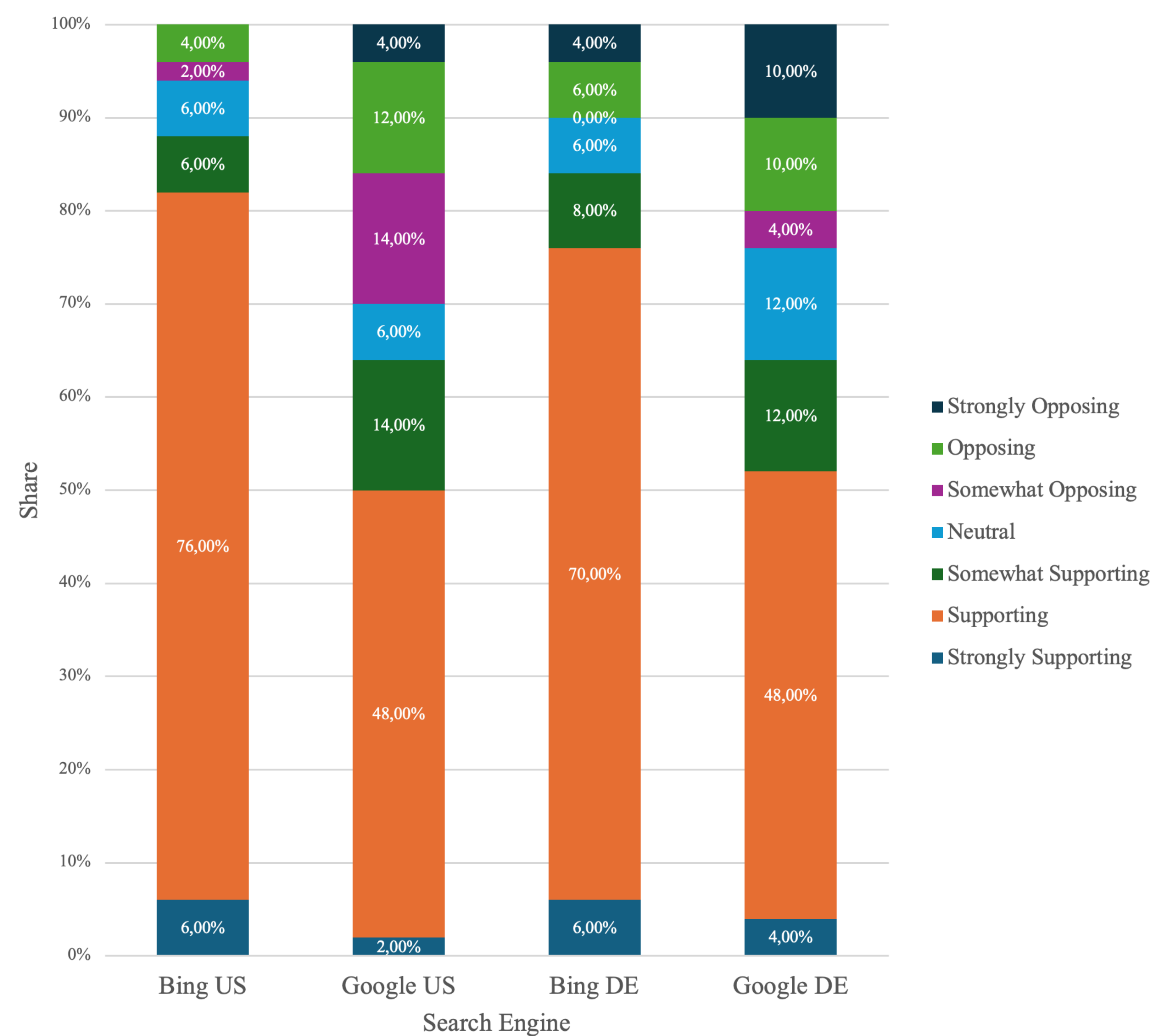


Figure 2: Stance distribution of the 50 most prevalent results in Bing and Google

The analysis of the top 50 search results from Bing and Google revealed a noticeable **imbalance in the distribution of viewpoints**, with a **strong inclination towards supporting** the ideology of the Manosphere (RQ3). Both search engines displayed a significant bias, particularly favoring the **"Supporting"** stance.

Discussion and Conclusion

Search results of Bing and Google show **significant support** for the Manosphere, indicating a bias towards a fixed agenda (Haider & Sundin, 2019). While this study **examined search results for the most popular queries with a monthly search average of 50 and above**, it did not examine queries that specifically convey different opinions of the Manosphere. Further research following this direction and other directions regarding search engines and pro-gender ideologies could be carried out in the future.

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