

Perceiving societal and moral trends related to sex abuse in the press through linguistic data analysis



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1 Main Goal

INE 2011 (Portuguese Statistics Institute) -> Catholic Religion is still dominant in Portugal with 7 281 887 catholic citizens.

- During 2021, 424 victims have been acknowledged to have suffered sexual abuse over the years by members of the Catholic Church (Observador, 2022).
- In 2020, 2 434 people were sexually abused by members of the common society (INE 2022)

What's our goal?

To analyse how this sort of crime is described in the portuguese press, easing or softening the way it is described/perceived according to the social group in which the agressor belongs.

2 Corpus Compilation and selection criteria

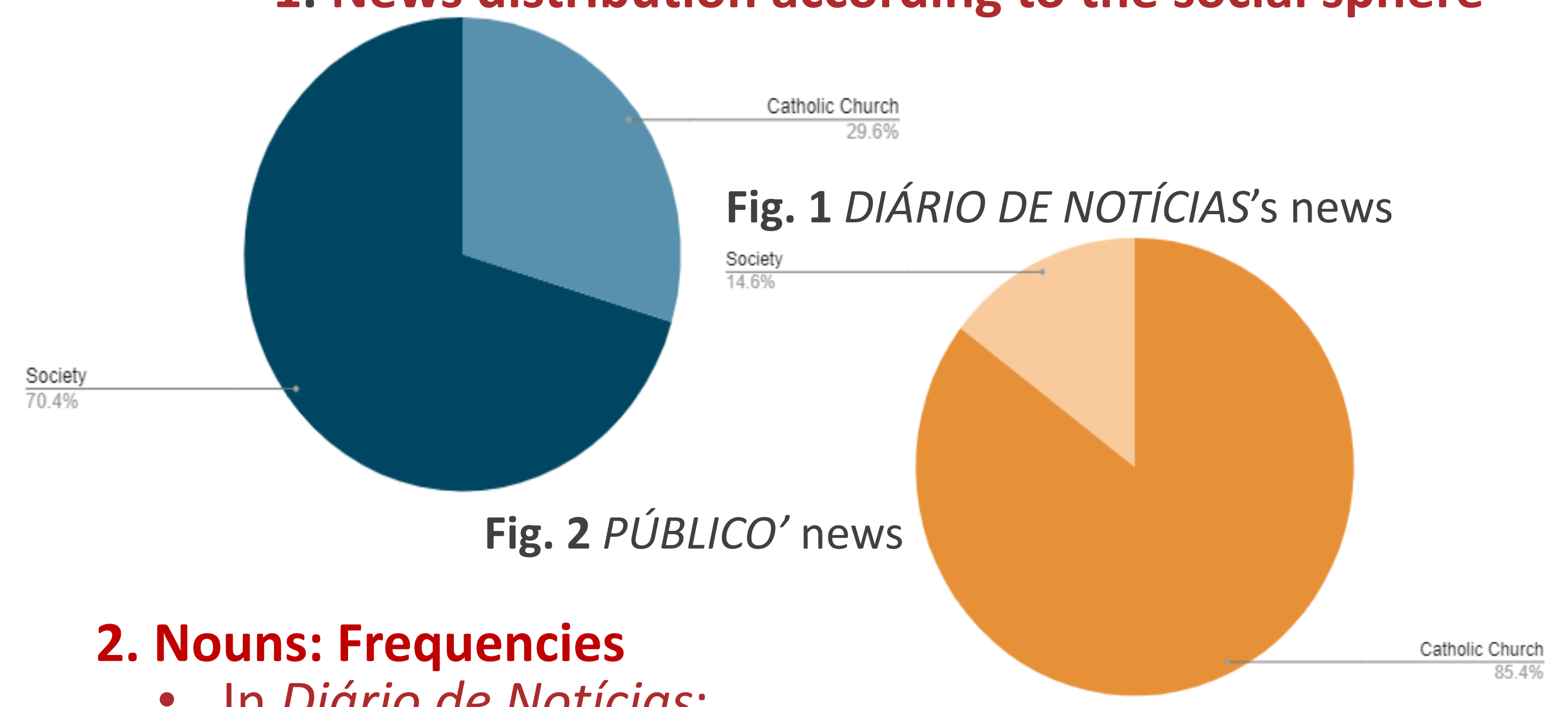
Collection of news articles from two online national Portuguese newspapers :

Diário Notícias: 27 news
Público: 41 news. => 68 news (49, 485 words)

Selection criteria:
Time period: January to October 2022
Common topic: "abuso sexual" (sex abuse)
Nationality and place of the crime: Portuguese Citizens in Portuguese territory
Corpus exploitation tool: Sketch Engine

3 Data

1. News distribution according to the social sphere



2. Nouns: Frequencies

- **In Diário de Notícias:**
 - Catholic Church: **commission**, church, abuse, instance, victim, Stretcht, **ministry**, **work**, **study**, testimony (nouns in bold highlight research work)
 - General Society: year, abuse, child, **crime**, underaged, **PJ**, man, society, **defendant**, **prison** (nouns in bold highlight culpability and prison sentence implementation)
- **In Público:**
 - Catholic Church: abuse, church, instance, comission, victim, year, **priest**, **complaint**, person, **bishop**.
 - General Society: year, **victim**, **violence**, abuse, **PJ**, **prison**, **crime**, underaged, **court**, child
 = nouns in bold highlight culpability and prison sentence implementation

2.1 Nouns: Concordances

- COMISSÃO [COMMISSION]

in <i>Diário de Notícias</i>	in <i>Público</i>
- 1st on the frequency list.	- 4th on the frequency list.
1. <i>Independent Commission for Studying Sex Abuse in the Catholic Church</i>	1. <i>Independent Commission for Studying Sex Abuse in the Catholic Church</i>
	2. <i>National Commission for the Protection of Children and Youth Rights</i>
	3. <i>Diocesan Commission for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable People.</i>
(highlight of the word independent- 50,1% of times referred as "comission"; 30,1% of the times referred as "independent comission"; 19,2% of the times referred with the full name)	
	when related to aggressors within the Catholic Church

3. Verbs: Concordances

3.1. In Diário de Notícias

- Aggressor within the Catholic Church
 - Aggressor within the general society
- investigar* (to inquire)
 - abusar* (to abuse)
 - deter* (to arrest)
 - condenar* (to condemn)

Only featured in common lexicon dictionaries of Portuguese

Featured in law dictionaires of Portuguese (Prata; Veiga & Vilalonga, 2008)

3.2 In Público

- Aggressor within the Catholic Church and the general society
- abusar* (to abuse) → Verb within the legal domain, used to account for crimes of abuse

4 Preliminary conclusions

- Different social perspectives underlie the articles in each newspaper:
- *Diário de Notícias*: positive and optimistic view when crimes are committed by members of the Catholic Church.
 - *Público*: Responsibility and intentionality is described and/or entailed in Church and Society the same.

Thank you!