Resident Power Progressions

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Abstract: Community developers have discussed how community engagement can be a way of individuals and communities to act. This article will look closely at five power ladders (1) Sherry Arnstein's "Ladder of Citizen Participation," (2) the South Lanarkshire Council's "Wheel of Participation," (3) the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) "Public Participation Spectrum" (4) the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute's "Citizen Power Ladder" developed by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight, (5) Deborah Puntenney's "Resident Power Progression" and, (6) "Residents and their Associations: A Power Ladder" developed by Jody Kretzmann, John McKnight, Sarah Dobrowolski, and Deborah Puntenney. This article has been the first one to put together the different conceptualizations to achieve resident power developed by the various faculty members at the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute. After comparing and contrasting the ABCD framework with three other very popular public participatory tools we can conclude that one of the main differences is that ABCD contests the structure of marginalization by transforming the language of individuals and social groups from victims or clients to producers and advocates for change.

1. Introduction

The field of community development addresses multiple and intersecting levels of marginalization, which might include socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, citizenship status, and other characteristics associated with unprivileged social situations [1-2]. Although most of community development work condemns, and rightfully so, structural dimensions of society such as racism, xenophobia, homophobia, ageism, classism, sexism, and other forms of intolerance, it falls short in offering those who have experienced differential treatment a way of acting [3-4]. In other words, once people are labeled as being in the margins (e.g., as homeless, disabled, old, etc.), there is a minimal conversation among policymakers, practitioners, academics, and others who spend their lives in the world of institutions about people's agency [5-6].

The problem is that once people are viewed through the prism of marginalization, it is all too often internalized and therefore difficult for them to see how can they can contribute [7-8]. The nature of marginalization establishes who is and who is not inside the circle, who can contribute and who cannot [9-10]. Even the term citizen, which holds the promise of agency for the common person, is divisive and has come to exclude people based on legal status [9,11-12]. Those who are kept at the margins of society or community have been demoralized, losing self-confidence and hope for the future [13-14]. When people are treated as victims or clients; when they are not given a choice to be producers, their confidence is destroyed [15-16]. What is more, demoralization fosters an environment of self-doubt and anxiety [17].

44   If this is the case, then, how can individuals and groups that have been conceptualized as being
45   in the margins of society enter a space of contribution when their problems and needs are constantly
46   amplified? There are two paths for developing the space where everyone is valued as an active
47   contributor to the community. One focuses on the process. What are processes that promote
48   participation by everyday people (often called citizens or residents) in decisions that affect their lives
49   [18-19]. The other focuses on the individual and their role. What are practices that work with
50   everyday people to increase their agency (voice, power) in public decision-making? [20-21].
51   The process for everyday people to participate in community decision-making, especially when
52   directed by public institutions or elected officials, is notoriously disempowering [22-23]. The
53   common process known as D.E.A.D. (decide, educate, announce and defend) happens all too
54   common [24]. First, according to Hartz-Karp (2007) a small group of influential stakeholders
55   "Decide" (D) behind closed doors what the future of a public project will look like and begin the
56   planning process. Second, these leaders begin to "Educated" (E) the community on the need for the
57   project and provide a rationale for the yet disclosed plan. Third, those in power "Announce" (A) the
58   plan that has already been decided and partially or fully planned out. Finally, with an understandable
59   reaction and/or rejection by the community of the plan, the leaders "Defend" (D) the decision.
60   Needless to say, the process forces community members into a reactionary mode, their best ideas and
61   contributions are not included, and as a result, the plan often misses the mark.
62   In this context, it is essential that we be clear about our intentions when conceptualizing
63   community participation [25]. There is a continuum of ownership by the community that we seek to
64   achieve through the process, but at a minimum, community engagement is "a planned process with
65   the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by
66   geographic location, special interest or affiliation, to address issues affecting their well-being" [26].
67   Ladders or participation, then, provide levels of voice or agency in those decision-making processes.
68   Turning to the roles individuals play in community development, Asset-Based Community
69   Development (ABCD) emphasizes the creation of policies and activities involving the capacities and
70   skills of neighborhood residents [27]. ABCD comes from the recognition that the development of an
71   entire community can only take place if residents can invest their gifts and themselves in the process.
72   Instead of depending entirely on outside resources and charity, ABCD establishes that it is better to
73   start the process of development from within the community—that is, from the inside out [12]. This
74   truth has been recognized much earlier by neighborhood leaders than by researchers and social
75   service providers. The efforts dedicated to the development of the community will be successful only
76   if there is a clear understanding of the internal assets and capabilities of the community. Connecting
77   all local assets of the neighborhood is an essential step towards rebuilding communities. This does
78   not imply that non-profits, foundations, and universities should abandon communities, and residents
79   need to do everything themselves. What it does say is that, if we are intentional in building
80   communities from the inside out, power will multiply. Community development from the outside is
81   not sustainable.
82   An inclusive approach would require institutions to recognize the contributions of individuals
83   and citizen groups to not act as an obstacle to the progression of community control. This would
84   require the institution to promote participation by considering how citizens can become producers.
85   A professional working in institutions need to be very careful about reproducing marginalization.
86   Inclusion is about changing attitudes about disadvantage, helping communities in overcoming their
87   exclusions.
88   Often the concept of how poor communities can be empowered is left to institutions. Institutions
89   empower and disempower individuals and communities. Nonetheless, the idea of how communities
90   can enable themselves to achieve community control is frequently not theorized. Theorization that
91   aid individuals, associations as well as institutions to act are particularly needed. There are certain
92   functions of community well-being that institutions are not effective in providing, that only can be
93   achieved when individuals come together and form associations. This article is an opportunity for
94   practitioners to reflect on how engagement can be transformed into citizen power.

95   Our discussion is organized in the following manner. First, we present several power
96 conceptualizations that practitioners have used in their work on public process, such as Sherry
97 Arnstein's "Ladder of Citizen Participation," the South Lanarkshire Council's "Wheel of
98 Participation," and the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) "Public Participation
99 Spectrum." Second, we discuss the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute's
100 "Citizen Power Ladder" developed by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight. We also present two
101 additional ABCD ladders—one produced by Deborah Puntenney the "Resident Power Progression"
102 and one developed by Jody Kretzmann, John McKnight, Sarah Dobrowolski and Deborah Puntenney
103 "Residents and their Associations: A Power Ladder." In the discussion, we compare the levels of
104 participation and agency that each of these ladders provide. We then discuss the implications of the
105 "Citizen Power Progression" and also advocate for a space of inclusion for those that have been left
106 at the margins of community.

107 **2. A Review of Power Ladders, Wheels, and Spectrums**

108 Community developers have discussed how community engagement can be a way of individuals
109 and communities to act. Community engagement has been conceptualized as a (1) ladder (e.g., Sherry
110 Arnstein's Ladder of Participation, figure 1), (2) wheel (e.g., South Lanarkshire Council's, figure 2)
111 and, (3) spectrum (e.g., International Association of Public Participation, figure 3) with levels of
112 increasing participation. Each level increases the degree of citizen control and, thus, the
113 empowerment of those who actively seek to participate in community work.

114 *2.1 Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation*

115 By the late 1960s, Sherry Arnstein (1969), who worked as an assistant to the U.S. Department of
116 Housing (HUD) secretary at the time, embraces the concept of Model Cities. The cities chosen such
117 as Detroit (Michigan), Atlanta (Georgia), and Hato Rey (Puerto Rico) were studies as case studies of
118 mixed-income communities where advisory committees would lead development and investments.
119 Arnstein presented what she called the "Ladder of Citizen Participation," each step moved toward
120 more authentic engagement—from manipulation to citizen control (see figure 2) [28].

121 2.1.1 Manipulation

122 Citizens are educated about the issues with a pre-determined staff recommendation. People are
123 expected to agree with the staff recommendation because studies already being made, and the most
124 rational conclusion already has been achieved.

125 2.1.2 Therapy

126 The purpose is to listen to people's grievances patiently, like a therapist. You are assuming that
127 nothing can be done about the issue at hand, but that at least a meeting could be a space for ranting.

128 2.1.3 Informing

129 This is the first step into tokenism. Citizens are informed of the process, issues, plans, etc. but are not
130 consulted. At this stage, there is no feedback from the public.

131 2.1.4 Consultation

132 Citizens are consulted via surveys, focus groups, public meetings, etc. This is limited engagement
133 because the public is not making decisions; they are just consulted for the information they can
134 provide to experts.

135 2.1.5 Placation

136 Some citizens are picked as a token to become part of advisory committees and boards. This gives
137 more legitimacy to power holders, who are not yet willing to share their power.

138   2.1.6 Partnership

139   Partnerships are the first step toward redistributing power between citizens and power holders.
140   Decision-making is shared thought negotiation and deliberative processes.

141   2.1.7 Delegation

142   Citizens are trusted to make their decisions. They are in charge of entire programs and budgets within
143   a project or organization.

144   2.1.8 Citizen Control

145   Citizens might use experts for technical assistance, but they are ultimately in control of all the
146   planning and funds; they have started their community development corporations.
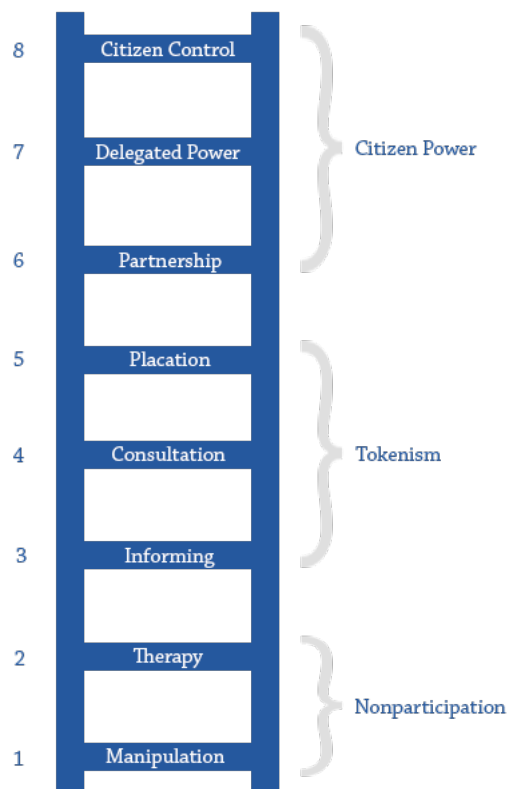
171   Figure 1. Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation

172   Arnstein's ladder has come to be seen as indispensable for sociologists, geographers, urban planners,
173   public administrators, and healthcare providers, to mention a few, trying to conceptualize the
174   processes and means they might use to engage communities. Ideas for community change need to
175   come from the interests, desires, and needs of people within those communities, with planners
176   playing a listening and facilitating rather than a prescriptive role. This means planners have the task
177   of not only planning *for* communities but also *with* them.

178   **2.2 South Lanarkshire Council's Wheel of Participation**

179   The South Lanarkshire Council, which is a unitary authority in Scotland, took as a basis Sherry
180   Arnstein's Ladder of Participation and revised it into a "Wheel of Participation" [29]. The wheel is
181   divided into four quadrants: (1) information, (2) consultation, (3) participation, and (4)
182   empowerment. The wheel then goes from people being told what is being done by the Council to
183   people taking important decisions that affect South Lanarkshire. The four quadrants and each
184   subcategory, for a total of 12 categorizations, are described below (see figure 3).

185 *2.2.1 Information*

186 In the "minimal information" (1.1) category, the South Lanarkshire Council provides some
187 information which it could be online or via public hearing. There is no actual consultation of the
188 public, although the public might give some comments. These comments might be recorded in the
189 meeting minutes, but the Council takes the decision. 1.2. "little info" is when the Council might
190 provide plans and documents for the public, and the public might ask questions. However, the
191 Council might answer questions superficially because the Council has an administrative decision. 1.3
192 "high-quality information" is when the Council dedicates time and resources to answer the questions
193 that the public has about X, Y, Z issue.

194 *2.2.2 Consultation*

195 "Limited consultation" (2.1) provides information in a limited manner that allows communities to
196 respond. For example, the Housing Authority in Puerto Rico might place a notice on their website or
197 the newspaper saying that they are accepting comments for their Substantial Amendment to the Puerto
198 Rico Disaster Recovery Action Plan 2.2. "Customer care" might occur when the public has a mechanism
199 to complain about an issue. As an example, the City might send a notice to all homeowners living
200 within a mile of a new site that is being developed for construction. Homeowners then might have
201 the opportunity to send a letter to the staff planner in charge of that site development; they could also
202 attend a public hearing on the topic. 2.3. "Genuine consultation" is when the Council seeks out the
203 community's opinions before any action is taken place. Members of the Council might assemble a
204 survey of the neighborhood to understand the needs and wants in that community.

205 *2.2.3 Participation*

206 "Effective advisory body" (3.1) is the act of inviting communities to come up with their proposals.
207 Members of the Council could carefully consider these proposals. 3.2. "Partnership" is to solve
208 problems with the district. In this case, the Council would partner with community leaders and
209 their associations, non-profits, or other institutions, being schools, libraries, etc. to plan together.
210 3.3. "Limited decentralized decision-making" is allowing community councils, neighborhood,
211 chambers of commerce, or other groups to make their own decisions in regards to projects such as
212 traffic calming in a neighborhood or placemaking and branding efforts a commercial district.

213 *2.2.4 Empowerment*

214 "Delegated control" (4.1) is delegating limited decision-making powers in a neighborhood. For
215 example, homeowners might decide to collect extra fees and form a homeowner association to
216 develop a new park in the area. 4.2. "Interdependent control" is when the Council facilitates residents
217 into forming an association, anon-profit or business to take on a service that is needed (e.g., picking
218 up the recycling, planting trees, cutting grass, and taking care of public landscaped areas, etc.).
219 Finally, "entrusted control" (4.3) is the act of giving back to residents and the community decision-
220 making powers. For example, the community might be given $1 million from taxes and might vote
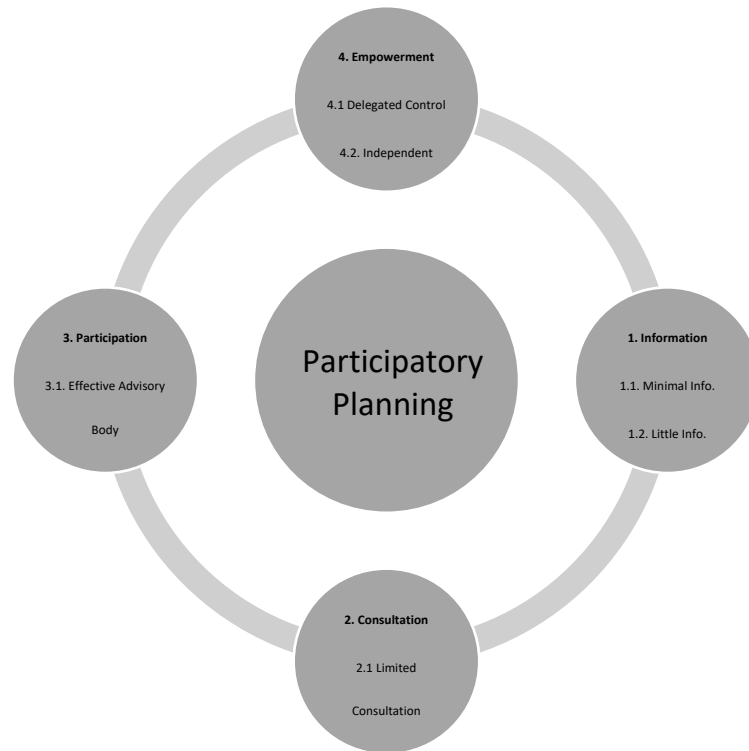221 on what they would like to see.

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225   Figure 3. Adaptation of South Lanarkshire Council's Wheel of Participation. Source: Ivis García.

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227   The South Lanarkshire Council "Wheel of Participation" in a way is more similar to the International
228   Association of Public Participation (IAP2) "Public Participation Spectrum" because it asks what the
229   Council is trying to achieve based on a particular project at hand. Then it decides as to which quadrant
230   and strategy would be appropriate. The wheel recognizes that in some instances, the public might
231   not be involved at all—a project could be information-only. The next section discusses the (IAP2)
232   Public Participation Spectrum.

233   **2.3 IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum**

234   The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) "Public Participation Spectrum" helps
235   planners pair their own community engagement needs with a level of public participation (see Figure
236   4). The first row in the figure shows a goal statement for public participation, so everyone shares a
237   common understanding of the extent to which the community will be engaged according to what is
238   needed in the planning process [23,25]. The second row is an example of a particular technique that
239   will aid that goal. The spectrum is composed of five categories: inform, consult, involve, collaborate,
240   and empower.

241   *2.3.1 Inform*

242   The first level in a spectrum is to inform the community. This step does not provide the public with
243   an opportunity to participate; it is something conceived of and orchestrated by decision-makers.

244   *2.3.2 Consult*

245   While the informing stage is a precursor to public participation, the consultation phase is an entry
246   point for public participation in the processes moving forward. For example, surveys are a great way
247   to consult with residents on issues that affect them.

248   *2.3.3 Involve*

249 Methods of involving community members in the decision-making process, such as through the
250 charrette technique, move the planning process from merely informing and consulting with
251 community members to include them in the process.

252 *2.3.4 Collaborate*

253 Collaboration with community members provides an opportunity for community members to secure
254 ownership over the planning process and its outcomes, which can aid in practical implementation.

255 *2.3.5 Empower*

256 The final level in the spectrum is for decision-makers to empower communities to make their own
257 decisions on issues that affect their lives.

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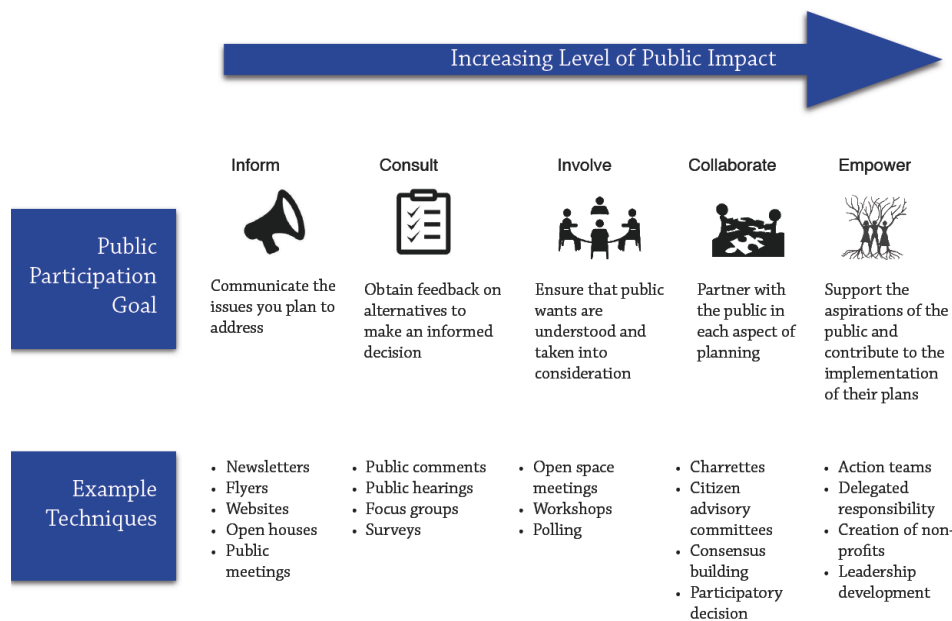261
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280 Figure 4. The spectrum of Public Participation. Adapted from the International Association of Public
281 Participation. Source: Ivis García.

282 Compared to Arnstein's Ladder, the IAP2 doesn't include manipulation and therapy. The levels start
283 at inform. Empowerment in the IAP2 is similar to the delegation and citizen control in the Arnstein's
284 ladder. The spectrum is from the perspective of the decision-makers and not citizens. Ideally, a
285 practitioner would start by "informing" and then move towards achieving "empowerment" for an
286 increasing level of public impact.

287 **3. Asset-Based Community Development Institute Power Ladders**

288 This article will discuss in more depth the Asset Based Community Development Power Ladder,
289 developed by Jody (Jody) Kretzmann and John McKnight, the ABCD Institute (figure 5). There are
290 other ladders produced by ABCD's faculty, which will be presented as well. For example, the one
291 developed by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight with Sarah Dobrowolski and Deborah Puntenney
292 (figure 6) was developed by Deborah Puntenney (figure 7).

293 **3.1 Jody and John's Citizen Power Progression**

The "Citizen Power Progression" which comes from the "ABCD basic slides" posted on the ABCD Institute website shows how the individual can increase their participation and improve their community. To the author's knowledge, the "Citizen Power Progression" is recently used in verbal presentations, but it has not been used in a publication. The progression identifies five positions that a citizen could take: (1) victim, (2) client, (3) advisor, (4) advocate and, (5) producer (see figure 5).

3.1.1 Victim

A victim, by necessity, is a recipient. It might be of violence, discrimination, or life circumstances. However, the word 'victim' has very negative connotations. The word communicates a deficiency, powerlessness, and incompetence [30]. This is why people do not necessarily define themselves directly as victims. In the narratives of young men who have experienced violent acts, interviewees tended to downplay vulnerability and claim responsibility because they did not want to present themselves as weak [31]. A similar study found that young men had "a desire to be portrayed as a competent and strong individual and not as a victim" [32]. According to the authors, these young men did not reject having a victim's identity, but they modified it to show their strengths as individuals.

Many studies show that individuals tend to reject victim narratives while simultaneously putting forward these narratives; they combine what seems like contradictory identities. This is because having a self-image of being a victim can be extremely damaging to an individual. Calling oneself a victim could result in further marginalization, instead of overcoming the experienced that resulted in exclusion. People are generally reluctant to fit the identity of victims, to put a label on themselves. Yet, individuals are discursively produced as victims frequently by institutions, who put these labels on people.

ABCD shifts the perception of being a victim or being marginalized to make space for engaging politically. Victimization creates shame, and people tend to denigrate themselves. Self-blame could result in people hiding from the community. This "also leads concerned outsiders into becoming charitable 'fixers' [16]. Outside institutions generally perceive people in communities as helpless and dependent on them. Studies have shown that institutions with altruistic behavior are more willing to invest their time and effort if they believe that dependency is externally caused. In other words, dependency is legitimate. Other research suggests that those who showed high levels of dependency received the most frequent help. Yet, dependency is "not the most effective relationships for enabling long-lasting change" [16]. Dependency has sociopolitical roots in colonialism, soft-forms of power and oppression. Those who foster dependence, most likely inadvertently, become a barrier for individuals and communities to become agents of change.

3.1.2 Client

It used to be that people in neighbors helped each other. With the growth of social services, neighbors needed each other less and less. There is a whole system of social service provision. Where "care" is outsourced to those, who are paid to "care." John McKnight argues that service systems cannot produce care. They can provide services such as education, health, etc. People in those institutions can care, but not the institution itself. In a way, social service organizations have stolen the notion of care and it says that the system can produce care. But care is not something that can be managed, it can be given and growth from connection. No system can ever deliver care.

Social service system depends on clients, they serve clients, and they are paid to serve clients. The relationship that is created here is social service: client. A client is someone who is characterized by their needs—people who need health care, education, housing, etc. Clients are waiting to receive services [16]. They are in a passive role of receiving services, and they are not asked to give back. Clients are pretty much always in a position of consumption and not production. This means that this relationship is not based on reciprocity. A neighborly relationship would be based on this promise but not a client: social service relationship. The relationship is not one of co-production but one of co-dependency. The social service organizations get paid if the client receives the service.

343   ABCD questions whether a relationship between a client and a social service provider can result in
344   empowerment.

3.1.3 Advisor

346   Above from residents being clients of social service organizations is the role of being "advisors for
347   institutional action" [33]. Organizations can ask themselves if they have neighborhood people on
348   their board of directors, advisory groups, or committees? Coincidentally, these advisors could be
349   clients that can help the organization bring the clients' perspective into the decision-making process.
350   Clients could be given the opportunity of sharing their gifts and talents (e.g., fundraising, facilitation,
351   advocacy, marketing, etc.) with the board of the organizations. This strategy is required of most
352   Community Development Organizations (CDCs), where at least one-third of the board and most time
353   half of the board are composed of neighborhood residents. This ensures that their interest is
354   represented within the organization. Many CDCs have a leadership arm to make sure that
355   community organizing occurs in the neighborhood and that some of these residents can join the
356   board. More progressive organizations will choose Chairs of the board or committees and even
357   executive director of organizations residents from the community.

3.1.4 Advocate

359   Many organizations partner with residents for advocacy goals. For example, an organization that
360   builds affordable housing might include in the Housing Committee tenants, community leaders, and
361   so on, and they might advocate in the city, state or even national level on housing policies that affect
362   them. Advocacy involves the organizations and the residents taking decisions together and co-
363   creating press releases, policies, apply for grants, etc., to implement a project that they come up with
364   together. If the project is funded or successful, this would entail a dedicated space from the
365   community in the new building or residents being hired in the project. In more progressive instances,
366   residents would seek the partnership of different organizations in their community to make their
367   own projects happen. Those who foster dependence, most likely inadvertently, become a barrier for
368   individuals and communities to become agents of change [34].

3.1.5 Producer

370   Participation should not be about passively making decisions as a technical exercise (e.g., saying yes
371   or no as a board member but not engaging in a real effort to build a better community). A lot of
372   discussions have gone to talk about democracy in a very shallow manner. One's right to vote. Another
373   strand of work is concerned with capacity building and the transformation of oneself and one's
374   community. When one becomes a producer, one starts creating opportunities for empowerment.
375   Producers engage in the act of redistributing power to non-elite groups because they have power
376   themselves. A producer not only claims its rights, but they create rights for others. They also take
377   responsibility. Producers participate, and thus, they can benefit from their participation. They set up
378   a vision of the future and benefit from the outcomes. Producers work in implementation. Producers
379   challenge unjust structures. Finally, producers work with organizations to co-producer with them on
380   their own and their community well-being.

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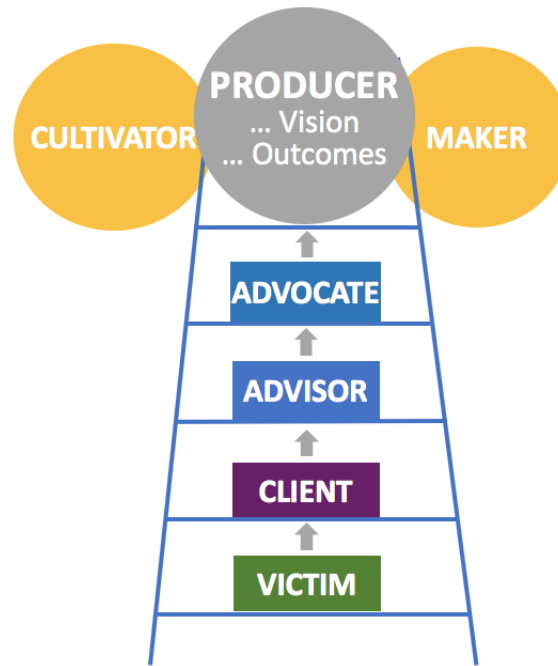
Figure 5. Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight ABCD "Citizen Power Progression." Source: ABCD
Institute basic slides.

3.2 Deborah Puntenney's Resident Power Progression

Deborah, is Emeritus Associate Professor from the School of Education and Social Policy at
Northwestern University and the Asset Based Community Development Institute, created the
"Resident Power Progression" shown in figure 6 to illustrate how engaging people as authentic actors
can facilitate change. She used the ladder in her own presentation slides and to the author's
knowledge they never have been published. At the bottom of the ladder, there is category "victim,"
just like in Jody and John's Citizen Power Progression. This ladder takes out "client" in order to make
it more relevant to organizations that might not have clients and goes straight to the "advisor"
category. Instead of "advocate" Deborah uses "participant" followed by "actor/ producer" (similar
to John and Jody's ladder). Dr. Puntenney moves "advocate" to the top of the ladder.

3.2.1 Victim

A victim can refer to someone that has been victimized, but it can also be a role people adopt. In our
society, many people have been victimized, and we need to change the systems and policies that
allow that to happen. But when people give up, and adopt the role of victims, this puts them in a
powerless place because victims never have power. Dr. Puntenney notes that one the goals of ABCD
is to move people out of that role and into increasingly sophisticated levels of engagement.

3.2.2 Advisor

Moving up the ladder, Dr. Puntenney emphasizes the role of advisor, which can be good or bad.
While advisor is a role people want to take, the advisor role can be an empty one, for example when
an institution sets up a community advisory board, but gives board members no power. Authentic
advisors have some kind of decision-making authority.

3.2.3 Participants

The next level, participant, an entry-level role. Participants get involved but don't generally
contribute to defining the vision or implementing it.

3.2.4 Actor/producer

409 An actor/producer is a critical role because it means people have stepped up and feel the confidence
410 & capacity to change some part of their world.

411 *3.2.5 Change advocate*

412 Finally, the most sophisticated role is change advocate. This is a person who is an actor/ producer,
413 but goes beyond that to work to change the systems and policies that support residents.

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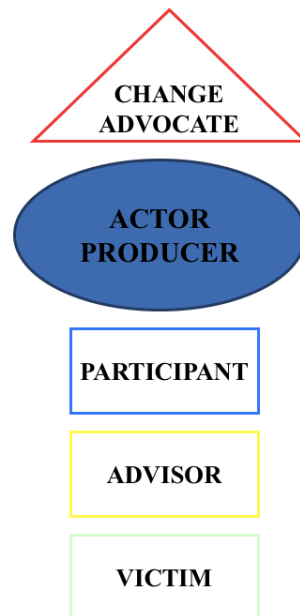
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416 Figure 6. Deborah Puntenney's "Resident Power Progression." Source: ABCD Institute.

417 **3.3 Residents and their Associations: A Power Ladder**

418 This ladder appeared first in a report funded by the Kellogg Foundation in 2005 titled, "Discovering
419 Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assess and Your Organization's capacity." The
420 authors of the workbook were John P. Kretzmann, John L. McKnight, Sarah Dobrowolski, and
421 Deborah Puntenney [27]. The "Residents and their Associations: A Power Ladder" has four rungs
422 residents as: (1) recipients, (2) information sources, (3) participants and, (4) in control (see figure 7).
423 The overall goal of the ladder is for institutions to start seeing residents not as clients or recipients of
424 aid, but as full contributors to the community-building process [27].

425 *3.3.1 Residents as recipients*

426 Clients are passive recipients of services. Similarly, residents in neighborhoods could be treated the
427 same way.

428 *3.3.2 Residents as information sources*

429 Most organizations often need to gather information from residents. A common example, is the use
430 of surveys by community based or government organizations.

431 *3.3.3 Residents as participants*

432 Community based organizations are rooted in place and have extensive contacts and information
433 about the neighborhood. Their primary mission is aimed at the community; they emphasize the
434 importance of place over other goals by having listening conversations with neighbors, community
435 leaders, and associations.

436 *3.3.4 Residents in control*

437 The goal of ABCD is that institutions see communities as "co-producers of health and well-being,
438 rather than the recipients of services" [35]. In more progressive examples, community-based
439 organizations could be controlled by local residents through the board or having a real say in the
440 organization's policies and programs [36]. Another way to exert community control is by obtaining
441 positions within organizations as well as organizing their communities towards the goals identified
442 by collaboration among residents.

443

Residents in Control
Residents **control** or **produce:**
Goal Setting, Planning, Implementation

Residents as Participants
Residents participate in:
Goal Setting, Planning, Implementation
Residents serve on governing body
Residents serve on advisory group
Residents serve as advocates for the organization

Residents as Information Sources
Residents are part of focus groups
Staff consults with residents
Residents fill out need surveys

Residents as Recipients
Residents receive services; they are clients only

444

445 Figure 7. Residents and their Associations: A Power Ladder. Developed by Jody Kretzmann, John
446 McKnight, Sarah Dobrowolski and Deborah Puntenney. Source: ABCD Institute.

6. Discussion: Moving Up the Progression for Greater Empowerment

448 Some focus on the individual as the unit of analysis. In IAP, the unit of analysis is public process. In
449 community organizing, the unit of analysis is the campaign with different roles individuals play in
450 an effective strategy. In comparing ladders (see figure 8), there are several themes in common. All
451 ladders conceptualize the highest level as empowerment or citizen control, reflecting a commitment
452 to the full actualization of community residents in the development of their community. All ladders
453 convey some form of active participation as more engaging than being consulted, which is more than
454 information sharing.
455 Differences are also significant. In the process-focused ladders, the lowest level of participation
456 is information sharing, with the Arnstein model dividing informing into nonparticipation, therapy
457 and manipulation. The therapy role would more aptly be termed today as complaining, where a
458 space is created for expression of grievances without avenues for addressing them. In contrast, the
459 lowest level in the individual-focused, ABCD approaches is being a victim. The characteristic of a
460 victim is someone that has suffered some injury or negative action upon them. This goes beyond
461 being a passive person to one of being harmed by the community. One level up from this level, not

462 identified in any of the ladders is a survivor, one who is actively taking steps in their recovery. It does
463 not negate what happens but redefines how the person sees it and the impact it has on them. A thriver
464 would be one step up from survivor who has largely moved beyond recovery to working toward
465 becoming an active participant in community life.
466   One difference that crosses process and individual-focused ladders is the number of levels or
467 rungs in the ladder. The Arnstein, South Lanarkshire, and the Kretzmann & McKnight with
468 Dobrowolski & Puntenney models all have eight or more steps. The other models provide broader,
469 more general levels that make it more difficult to conceive of a gradual progression, of how people
470 would move from one level to the next.

471

PROCESS FOCUSED Non-ABCD			INDIVIDUAL/ROLE FOCUSED ABCD		
Arnstein	**South Lanarkshire Council**	**IAP2**	**Kretzmann & McKnight**	**Puntenney**	**Kretzmann & McKnight with Dobrowolski & Puntenney**
Citizen Power	*Empowerment*				*Residents in Control*
Citizen Control	Entrusted Control	Empower	Producer	Change Advocate	Control goals, planning, & implementation
	Independent Control	Collaborate	Advocate	Actor/ Producer	*Residents as Participants*
Delegation	Delegated Control				On governing boards
Partnership	*Participation*	Involve			On Advisory boards
Tokenism	Limited Centralized Decision-Making			Participants	Serve as advocates
	Partnership				*Residents as Information Sources*
Placation	Effective Advisory Body		Advisor	Advisor	Part of focus groups
Consultation	*Consultation*	Consult			Consulted
	Genuine Communication				
	Customer Care		Client		
	Limited Consultation				Fill out surveys
Informing	*Information*				*Residents as Recipients*
Non-participation	High Quality Info	Inform			Receive Services
Therapy	Little Info				Clients
Manipulation	Minimal Info				
			Victim	Victim	

472   Figure 8. Six Conceptualizations of Achieving Citizen Power and Control. Source: Ivis García &
473   Mark Chupp (Note: Bold italics represent the major rungs on the ladder of particular models)

474 **7. Conclusion**

475 Victimization restricts inclusion. Asset based community development challenges the view that
476 victimization should be reinforced [12, 16, 27, 33]. Even when many community development work
477 comes from the perspective of people being "victims" of discrimination, social and economic
478 disadvantage, once an individual or group is associated with disadvantage it is very hard for others
479 (e.g., teachers, potential employers, social service providers, etc.) to see their human capital (e.g.,
480 skills, gifts, capacities, etc.). Not acknowledging one's human capital is an indirect way of
481 exacerbating the failures of individuals; inability to get a job, an education, raise children with values
482 and so on. The result is then a needs assessment and not a map of individual and community assets.

483 Although policymakers might see people as suffering from socioeconomic circumstances. They
484 would say they do not blame the victim for their individual actions but place the fault in society as a
485 whole. Yet, these same policymakers are unlikely to take full responsibility for the individual's future
486 success. This is why the realization of rights can only happen if individuals assume responsibility
487 along with policymakers to create change. This is also why so many authors and organizations have
488 dedicated time and effort to develop power ladders, spectrums, wheels, and progressions. These
489 conceptualizations tools can really help institutions think about their engagement process and the
490 roles they have created for clients and residents, and ultimately, consider how they can facilitate
491 community control and empowerment.

492 From the perspective of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) as illustrated from
493 various the Power Progressions and Ladders, institutions (e.g., that is government, non-profit
494 organizations, and businesses) are not the source of empowerment, but rather a space in which the
495 citizen's gifts may or may not be valued. In this way, the ABCD Power Progressions and Ladders—
496 the "Citizen Power Ladder" developed by Jody Kretzmann and John McKnight, Deborah Puntenney
497 "Resident Power Progression" and the "Residents and their Associations: A Power Ladder"
498 developed by Jody Kretzmann, John McKnight, Sarah Dobrowolski and Deborah Puntenney are
499 similar to the "Ladder of Citizen Participation," the "Wheel of Participation," and the "Public
500 Participation Spectrum."

501 What all of these ladders, progressions, wheels, and spectrums have in common is that they seek
502 for ultimately the community be the owners of their own destiny by having control and achieve
503 empowerment and self-determination. What is different is how ABCD talks about marginality in a
504 way where the community or individual has no agency, it becomes in itself a structure of
505 discrimination. This article has been the first one to put together the different conceptualizations to
506 achieve resident power developed by the various faculty members at the ABCD Institute, located in
507 Chicago. After comparing and contrasting the ABCD framework with three other very popular public
508 participatory tools we can conclude that one of the main differences is that ABCD contests the
509 structure of marginalization by transforming the language of individuals and social groups from
510 victims or clients to producers and advocates for change.

511 Steps on a ladder do not guarantee citizen control or empowerment of everyday people.
512 Institutional leaders and designers of public processes would benefit from conducting a values
513 clarification exercise first. What are the driving values for engaging the community? Making explicit
514 underlying values, such as community control, joint ownership, mutual trust and collaboration, will
515 help leaders develop a process that is congruent and transparent. Communities are not easily fooled
516 and are able to discern when their voice is a pseudo engagement process to neutralize potential
517 opposition. In the end, designing good process that creates spaces for authentic engagement
518 facilitates individuals taking on higher roles as defined in the ABCD approach. When done well,
519 communities build themselves from the inside out and public institutions and developers support
520 them in a win-win community development process.

521

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525 visualization, Ivis García, and Mark Chupp; project administration, Ivis García.

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