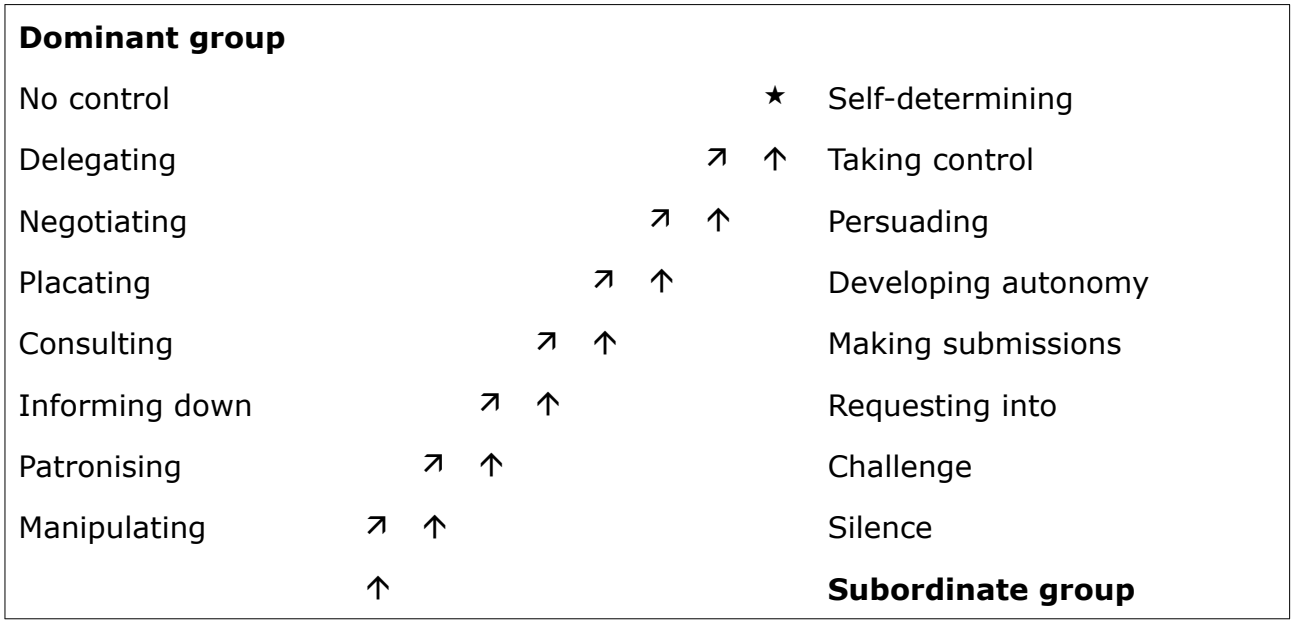
STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS: LADDER TO POWER

This model combines two others: a model by a planner interested in citizen participation and control[1] and one from structural analysis dealing with power-over one's own situation.

Figure 1. **Ladder to power**



The left side is the behaviour of the dominant group, which initially has virtually all of the power-over. The model assumes resistance from the dominant group to any change in the position of the subordinate group. At equilibrium the subordinate group's response to manipulation is to be silent. The model suggests that the subordinate group should try to move one step up to challenge if it wants change. If the dominant group moves up one step on their side to re-establish equilibrium, that is success!

The idea is to keep moving up the right side, always pushing the dominant group one step ahead. There may be many good reasons why a group on the right-hand side is not in a position to move up to the next step. They may be fully occupied trying to thwart an attempt by the dominant group to move them down a step, in which case maintaining equilibrium is success.

The ladder indicates steps toward self-determination and the order in which control over decision-making shifts. It assumes that power is finite (see 'Power Pole'). It can be applied in domestic as well as group and societal situations.

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[1] Sherry R. Arnstein. "Eight Rungs on a Ladder of Citizen Participation". Journal of the American Institute of Planners. 35(4), July 1968.

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