



compared with 26.2% for independents. A similar tendency to that of men's clothing stores was observed in shoe store sales. Chains used to account for a smaller proportion of the total, but after a sales increase of 44.8% compared with 17.6% for independents, sales through chains are now greater than those made through independent outlets. A similar increase in the strength of chains can be observed in furniture, television and appliance stores, fuel dealers and drug stores. In each case the sales increase through chains compared to that of independents grew much faster in the period 1970-74.

Table 18.3 illustrates the relative importance of chains by kind of business and the trends from 1966 to 1974. The percentages shown in this Table represent the chains' share of the market and the balance is accounted for by the independents. In 1974 chain stores accounted for 40.7% of the total market (and independent stores for 59.3%) compared to 33.0% in 1966. The largest change occurred in women's clothing stores where chain stores increased their share of the market between 1966 and 1974 from 26.5% to 40.9%, and also in grocery and combination stores where chains increased their market share from 44.9% in 1966 to 57.5% in 1974. Service station and garage chains almost tripled their share of the total revenue from 3.4% in 1966 to 11.0% in 1974. Only in all other food stores, motor vehicle dealers, variety stores and furniture, TV and appliance stores did the chains fail to make progress at the expense of independent operators. However, it is important to remember that independent stores still account for nearly 60% of all retail sales in Canada and that they have yielded their dominant position only recently in shoe stores and in grocery and combination stores.