

**BOOK OF ABSTRACT  
OF THE  
2ND COVENANT UNIVERSITY  
CONFERENCE ON  
ENTREPRENEURSHIP (CU-ICE)  
2018**

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**PUBLISHED BY  
CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT  
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## **INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERING AND PERFORMANCE OF SMEs IN NIGERIA: DOES FIRM AGE AND SIZE HAVE ANY INFLUENCE?**

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### **Abstract**

*This research focused on examining the relationship between industrial clustering and performance of SMEs in Nigeria, and to identify the moderating role of firm age and size on this relationship. A sample size of 65 owners/managers of technology-based small and medium enterprises were surveyed through the use of structured questionnaire. Hierarchical multiple regression were adopted in analysing the research instrument. Based on the findings from the statistical analysis, this research concludes that there is a direct relationship between industrial clustering and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. The study also asserts that firm age is a critical influencer of the relationship between industrial clustering and performance of SMEs. Consequently, it is recommended that SME operators in Nigeria should leverage on industrial clustering as a means of enhancing their performance levels. More so, owners/managers of SMEs, bearing in mind the age categorization of their organizations should form industrial clusters in ways that help younger firms share from the experiences of older firms to enhance their performance.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Industrial Clustering, Innovation, Firm Age, Firm Size, SMEs performance