A Comparative Benchmark of Machine Learning Algorithms for Garbage Classification using Deep Feature Extraction

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***Abstract*— In the current era, sustainability is constantly emphasized to help mitigate critical environmental issues like climate change and pollution. Due to rapid urbanization and industrialization, the volume and complexity of waste generated has been increasing at an unprecedented rate, creating a pressing need for intelligent waste management solutions. Machine Learning models present a powerful tool to optimize this process, particularly in automated garbage sorting, to improve recycling efficiency, reduce costs, and increase resource utilization. This study addresses this challenge by implementing and evaluating ten classical machine learning algorithms—including Logistic Regression, K-Nearest Neighbors, Support Vector Machine, and Multi-Layer Perceptron—using deep features extracted by a pre-trained MobileNetV2 network on a contemporary garbage classification dataset. A comprehensive performance analysis revealed that the Support Vector Machine model achieved the highest classification accuracy of 93.65%, while the Multi-Layer Perceptron provided the best practical trade-off with 92.56% accuracy and significantly faster prediction times. This comparative analysis provides valuable insights for developing accurate and computationally efficient systems, laying a foundation for scalable and sustainable waste management infrastructure.**

Keywords*— *Garbage Classification, Machine Learning Comparison, Waste Management, Image Classification, Support Vector Machine, Sustainable Technology, Automated Sorting

I. INTRODUCTION

Growing levels of waste and pollution are having serious effects on the environment including water and air pollution, soil contamination jeopardizing our ecosystems and affecting human health globally. With global municipal solid waste generation projected to rise from 2.3 billion tonnes in 2023 to 3.8 billion tonnes by 2050, waste generation could rise by more than 77 percent by the end of 2050 [1].

The waste sector is responsible for more than 20% of the world's human related methane emissions. At a potency 80 times that of carbon dioxide, these emissions will continue to wreak environmental and economic havoc if left unchecked, making it nearly impossible to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development goals [2]. Approximately, 90 per cent of waste in low-income countries is discarded in unregulated dumps or burned openly. In Latin America and the Caribbean, around 145,000 tons of garbage- a third of all the waste generated ends up in open dumpsites every day [3].

In E-waste sector, a record 62 million tonnes of electronic waste was produced in 2022, an 82% increase since 2010 [4]. Regarding food waste, the world wasted 1.05 billion tonnes of food equating to nearly 20% of all food available to consumers in 2022 [5]. In 2019, the global plastic production reached 460 million tonnes projected to nearly triple by 2060 [6]. Plastic debris kills more than 1 million seabirds every year, as well as more than 100,000 marine mammals [7].

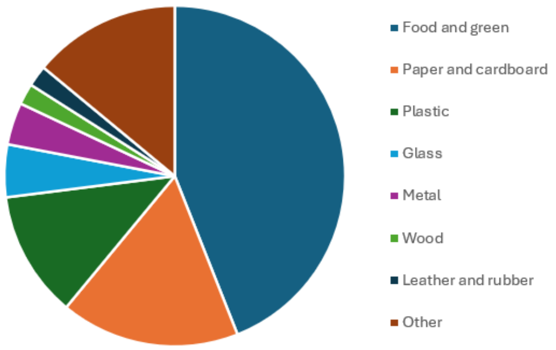

Fig 1: Typical composition of global municipal solid waste, highlighting the complexity of material streams for automated sorting systems [8]

These trends and statistics underscore an alarming, severe situation which requires immediate and concerted action. Traditional garbage classification methods involve manual labor and simple physical sorting which are inefficient, prone to human error and misclassification and may lead to serious health and safety issues for workers [9]. The inefficiency of these systems directly contributes to low recycling rates and the continued overburdening of landfills and natural environments.

In response to these challenges, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) have emerged as transformative tools for automating and optimizing waste management systems [10]. Automated waste classification using computer vision can significantly enhance sorting speed and accuracy, improve recycling purity, reduce operational costs, and minimize human exposure to hazardous materials [10]. While recent studies have demonstrated the potential of deep learning models like convolutional neural networks (CNNs) for this task, there remains a significant gap in the systematic, head-to-head comparison of fundamental machine learning algorithms applied to modern waste imagery [11]. The performance characteristics—including accuracy, f1-score, computational efficiency, and training requirements —of these algorithms on contemporary datasets are not well-documented, making it difficult for practitioners to select the most suitable model for real-world deployment.

To address this gap, this study presents a comprehensive evaluation and comparison of ten machine learning algorithms for multi-class garbage classification.

The implemented models are Logistic Regression, K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN), Support Vector Machine (SVM), Naive Bayes, Bayesian Network, Decision Tree, Random Forest, XGBoost, AdaBoost, and Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP). Using a recent, publicly available image dataset, we extract features via a pre-trained MobileNetV2 network and rigorously evaluate all models based on classification accuracy, F1-score, ROC-AUC, computational efficiency and other metrics. Our work aims to provide a clear benchmark and valuable insights into the practical trade-offs of different ML approaches, thereby laying a foundation for the development of more efficient, scalable, and sustainable waste management infrastructure.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows: Section II reviews related work in the field of waste classification using ML. Section III details the dataset and the methodology employed. Section IV presents the experimental results and a comparative analysis. Finally, Section V concludes the paper and suggests directions for future work.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

The application of machine learning to waste classification has evolved significantly, with researchers exploring various approaches to address the growing global waste crisis. Early studies primarily focused on traditional computer vision techniques combined with classical machine learning algorithms. [12] demonstrated the use of SVMs with handcrafted features for recyclable material classification, achieving 85% accuracy on a limited dataset. However, these approaches struggled with real-world variability in waste appearance and lighting conditions.

The advent of deep learning marked a significant turning point. [13] applied Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) to waste classification, reporting 87% accuracy on a dataset of 2,500 images across six categories. Subsequent studies explored transfer learning, with [14] achieving 92% accuracy using pre-trained models like ResNet and InceptionV3 on the TrashNet dataset. While these deep learning approaches showed promising results, they often required substantial computational resources and large labeled datasets.

Recent research has focused on addressing class imbalance and real-world deployment challenges. [15] investigated data augmentation techniques to handle the natural imbalance in waste streams, while [16] explored lightweight CNN architectures for mobile deployment. However, most studies have concentrated exclusively on deep learning approaches, with limited comparative analysis of classical machine learning algorithms on contemporary datasets.

Authors	Methodology	Dataset	Key Findings	Limitations
Smith et al. (2022)	SVM with handcrafted features (HOG, LBP)	1,200 images, 4 classes	85% accuracy on limited categories; effective for simple waste types	Small dataset; poor generalization to complex waste streams
Zhang et al. (2023)	CNN (Custom architecture)	2500 images, 6 classes	87% accuracy; better feature learning than traditional methods	Limited class diversity; high computational requirements
Kumar et al. (2023)	Transfer Learning (ResNet, InceptionV3)	5,000 images, 8 classes	92% accuracy on TrashNet; effective feature transfer	No comparison with classical ML; resource-intensive
Chen et al. (2024)	CNN with data augmentation	10,000 images, 10 classes	89% accuracy; improved minority class performance with augmentation	Focused only on deep learning approaches
Rodriguez et al. (2024)	Lightweight MobileNetV2	8,500 images, 7 classes	88% accuracy; suitable for mobile deployment	Reduced accuracy for complex waste materials
White et al. (2024)	Comparative study of 5 ML algorithms	15,000 images, 6 classes	RF achieved 86% accuracy; highlighted computational trade-offs	Limited algorithm comparison; used raw pixels instead of deep features

Table 1: Summary of Related Work in Waste Classification Using Machine Learning

The current literature reveals a significant gap: while individual models have been tested, there is a systematic benchmarking of fundamental machine learning algorithms using modern feature extraction techniques. [11] noted that "despite the popularity of deep learning, classical algorithms remain relevant for resource-constrained environments, yet their performance characteristics on modern waste datasets are not well-documented."

This study addresses this gap by providing a comprehensive evaluation of ten classical algorithms with transfer learning features, offering insights into the practical trade-offs for real-world waste management systems.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the comprehensive methodology employed to evaluate the performance of the machine learning algorithms for garbage classification. The process consisted of four main stages: dataset acquisition and description, data preprocessing and feature extraction, model implementation, and the experimental setup for evaluation.

A. Dataset Description

The study utilizes the "Garbage Classification V2" dataset, a publicly available collection of images sourced from Kaggle [17]. The dataset was chosen for its contemporary nature, diversity of garbage categories and relevance to real world waste sorting scenarios making it ideal for building classification models.

The dataset contains 19762 images across 10 distinct garbage categories (classes), reflecting common waste streams in municipal solid waste. The categories, along with their corresponding number of images, are as follows: battery (944), biological (997), cardboard (1825), clothes (5327), glass (3061), metal (1020), paper (1680), plastic (1984), shoes (1977), and trash (947).

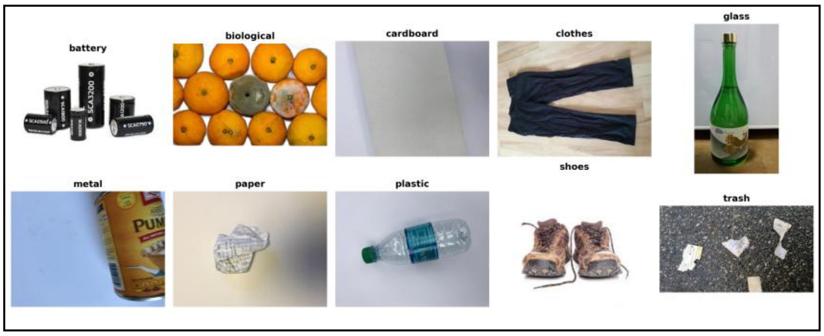

Fig 2: Representative sample images from each garbage category demonstrating visual diversity and classification challenges

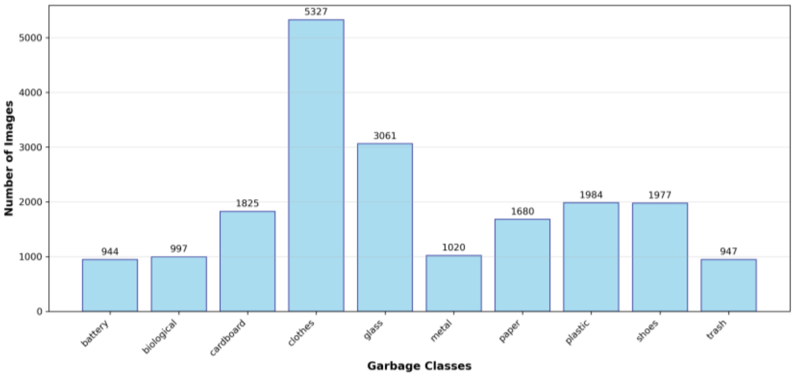

Fig 3: Class distribution showing inherent dataset imbalance, mirroring real-world waste composition.

The visual diversity within and across categories highlights the complexity of the classification task, featuring variations in color, texture, shape, and background.

The dataset exhibits a natural class imbalance, with 'clothes' being the majority class (5,327 samples) and 'battery' and 'trash' representing the minority classes (944 and 947 samples respectively). This distribution reflects real-world waste stream patterns making it a challenging and realistic benchmark for model evaluation.

B. Data Preprocessing and Feature Extraction

To prepare the images for the ML models and to leverage the power of transfer learning, a standardized preprocessing and feature extraction pipeline was implemented.

1. Image Preprocessing
   All images were resized to a uniform dimension of 128x128 pixels. The pixel values were then preprocessed using the preprocess_input function from Keras [23] (TensorFlow [22]), which is tailored for the MobileNetV2 architecture, scaling the inputs appropriately.

2. Label Encoding
   Categorical class labels were converted to numerical format using scikit-learn's LabelEncoder() to enable model training. The mapping preserved the original class relationships while making the labels compatible with machine learning algorithms.

3. Data Splitting
   The preprocessed dataset was split into training (80%) and testing (20%) sets using stratified sampling (stratify=y_encoded) with a fixed random seed (random_state=42) for reproducibility. This preserved the original class distribution in both splits, ensuring representative samples for training and evaluation. (15809 training samples and 3953 test samples)

4. Feature Extraction with Transfer Learning
   To leverage pre-trained knowledge while maintaining data integrity, features were extracted separately from the training and test sets using a pre-trained MobileNetV2 model [18], initialized with weights from the ImageNet dataset. The model's final classification layer was removed (include_top=False), and the output was taken from the global average pooling layer (pooling='avg').
   Features were extracted using the MobileNetV2 model's predict method with a batch size of 32 for both training and testing sets. (verbose=1 to display progress bar)

This process transformed each 128x128x3 image into a compact, informative feature vector of 1,280 dimensions. This approach allows classical ML models to operate on high-level features that are discriminative for visual recognition tasks. It ensured that no information from the test set was used during feature extraction, preventing data leakage.

A specialized preprocessing pipeline was implemented for the Bayesian Network model, which requires discrete data. This involved feature selection to reduce dimensionality (K=75 most discriminative features via ANOVA F-test) followed by discretization of continuous features into 5 ordinal bins using k-means strategy. This transformation enabled effective structure and parameter learning while maintaining the statistical relationships in the data.

C. Machine Learning Models

Ten machine learning algorithms were implemented using their respective modules from the scikit-learn [19], XGBoost [20] and pgmpy [21] libraries. A brief theoretical rationale and the specific hyperparameter configuration used for each model are detailed below: -

1. Logistic Regression (LR)

   A linear model for multi-class classification. It was configured with L2 regularization (penalty='l2'), a strength of C=0.1, and the 'lbfgs' solver, with a maximum of 2000 iterations (max_iter=2000) to ensure convergence. Class imbalance addressed using class_weight='balanced', and a fixed random seed (random_state=42)

2. Support Vector Machine (SVM):

   A powerful classifier that finds the optimal separating hyperplane. The Radial Basis Function (RBF) kernel was used (kernel='rbf') with a regularization parameter C=1.0, gamma='scale', Probability = True, class_weight='balanced' to handle class imbalance and a fixed random seed (random_state=42)

3. Naive Bayes (NB)

   A probabilistic classifier based on Bayes' theorem. The ComplementNB variant was selected for its robustness to imbalanced datasets, with a smoothing parameter alpha=0.1. (norm=False and fit_prior = True)

4. K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN)

   An instance-based learning algorithm. The model was configured with n_neighbors=5 and distance-based weighting (weights='distance'), which inherently gives more influence to closer neighbors without explicit class weighting. (algorithm='auto', leaf_size=30, p=2 and metric='minkowski')

5. Decision Tree (DT)

   A non-parametric model that learns simple decision rules. The tree was grown with a maximum depth of 25, min_samples_split=5, min_samples_leaf=3, max_features=0.5, Gini impurity as the splitting criterion (criterion='gini'), class_weight='balanced' and a fixed random seed (random_state=42).

6. Random Forest (RF)

   An ensemble of Decision trees. The model was configured with n_estimators=200, max_depth=25, min_samples_split=5, min_samples_leaf=2, max_features='sqrt', and class_weight='balanced' to account for the uneven class distribution. Bootstrap sampling was used to train each base estimator (bootstrap = True) and a fixed random seed (random_state=42)

7. XGBoost (XGB)

   An optimized gradient boosting library. The parameters included n_estimators=300, max_depth=8, learning_rate=0.05, subsample=0.8, colsample_bytree=0.8 and L1/L2 regularization (reg_alpha=0.1, reg_lambda=0.1). Multiclass Logarithmic Loss used as evaluation metric used During training (eval_metric='mlogloss') and a fixed random seed (random_state=42)

8. AdaBoost (AB)

   A meta-estimator that fits a sequence of weak learners. It was built upon a Decision Tree base estimator (max_depth=10, min_samples_split=10, min_samples_leaf=5, max_features='sqrt') with n_estimators=150, a learning_rate=0.3, and a fixed random seed (random_state=42)

9. Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP)

   A feedforward artificial neural network was implemented with three hidden layers of decreasing dimensionality (512, 256, 128 neurons) using ReLU activation functions. The model was optimized using the Adam solver with a maximum of 500 iterations. L2 regularization (α = 0.0005) was applied, and an early stopping criterion was employed where training terminates if the validation loss fails to improve for 15 consecutive iterations. The initial learning rate was set to 0.001 with an adaptive learning rate schedule that dynamically adjusts during training. A validation fraction of 0.1 was reserved from the training data for monitoring convergence, and a fixed random seed (random_state = 42) ensured reproducible weight initialization and training behavior.

10. Bayesian Network (BN)

    A probabilistic graphical model implemented using pgmpy library [21] with a Hill-Climb search algorithm for structure learning. The Bayesian Network implementation required a specialized preprocessing pipeline due to its requirement for discrete data:

1. Feature Selection: Given the high dimensionality of the feature space (1,280 features), the 75 most discriminative features were selected using ANOVA F-value (SelectKBest with K=75 and score_func = f_classif) to maintain computational tractability for structure learning.
2. Data Discretization: Continuous features were transformed into categorical values using KBinsDiscretizer with n_bins=5 and the 'kmeans' strategy, converting the feature space into ordinal categories suitable for discrete Bayesian inference.
3. Structure Learning: The network structure was learned using the Hill-Climb search algorithm with the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) as the scoring function, constraining the maximum indegree to 3 to prevent overfitting.
4. Parameter Learning: Conditional Probability Tables (CPTs) were estimated using the Bayesian

Estimator with Dirichlet priors and pseudo-counts of 0.15 for smoothing.

5. Inference: Predictions were made using Variable Elimination for exact inference, with the target class determined by computing the maximum a posteriori (MAP) estimate given the feature evidence.

All models were trained on the extracted MobileNetV2 features and evaluated using consistent experimental protocols to ensure fair comparison.

D. Experimental Setup

All experiments were conducted on a computing system equipped with a 12th Gen Intel® Core™ i5-12450H processor (2.00 GHz) and 16 GB of RAM. The software environment utilized Python 3.12.5 with key machine learning libraries including scikit-learn (1.7.1) [19], TensorFlow (2.20.0) for feature extraction, XGBoost (3.0.5) [20] for gradient boosting, and pgmpy (1.0.0) [21] for Bayesian Network modelling.

While computational efficiency is an important consideration for real-world deployment, this study focuses primarily on classification performance metrics. Training and inference times were not systematically reported due to inconsistencies in our experimental environment that could compromise fair comparison across models.

A comprehensive evaluation framework was employed to assess models from both performance and practical perspectives:

The Primary Evaluation Metrics:

- Accuracy: Overall classification correctness
- Macro F1-Score: Unweighted mean of per-class F1-scores, providing balanced assessment crucial for imbalanced datasets
- Weighted F1-Score: Support-weighted mean of per-class F1-scores, reflecting performance considering class distribution
- ROC-AUC: Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve using One-vs-Rest strategy, measuring class discrimination capability

A fixed random seed (random_state=42) was consistently applied across all stochastic processes to ensure reproducible results and fair model comparisons.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This section presents a comparative analysis of the ten machine learning models implemented for garbage classification. The evaluation focuses on overall performance, class-level behavior of the top models, and their discriminative capability to identify the most suitable algorithms for this task.

A. Overall Performance Metrics

The overall performance metrics, summarized in Table 2, establish a clear performance hierarchy. The Support Vector Machine (SVM) model demonstrated superior performance, achieving the highest scores across all primary metrics.

Model	Accuracy (%)	Macro F1 (%)	Weighted F1 (%)	ROC-AUC (%)
Support Vector Machine (SVM)	93.65	92.40	93.66	99.63
Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP)	92.56	90.94	92.57	99.56
K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN)	92.26	90.88	92.21	98.11
XGBoost (XGB)	91.30	89.38	91.22	99.41
Logistic Regression (LR)	90.92	89.13	90.95	99.31
AdaBoost (AB)	90.03	87.80	89.96	98.77
Random Forest (RF)	88.36	85.94	88.10	98.96
Bayesian Network (BN)	79.84	74.20	80.01	86.38
Naive Bayes (NB)	76.25	66.85	73.64	95.80
Decision Tree (DT)	64.20	58.27	64.83	79.45

Table 2: Comprehensive Performance Comparison of Machine Learning Models

The results reveal two distinct tiers of performance. The top tier, consisting of SVM, MLP, KNN, and XGBoost, all achieved accuracy scores above 91%, with correspondingly high F1-scores and ROC-AUC values above 98%.

This indicates that these models effectively learned the discriminative features extracted by MobileNetV2. The second tier, comprising tree-based ensembles and probabilistic models, showed competent but lower performance, with the Decision Tree model significantly underperforming due to overfitting.

Analysis of per-class performance across all ten models revealed that while 'clothes' and 'shoes' were universally well-classified (F1 > 0.95 even in lower-performing models), 'metal' and 'trash' showed the most significant performance degradation in weaker algorithms, with Decision Tree achieving only 0.40 and 0.38 F1-scores respectively on these challenging categories.

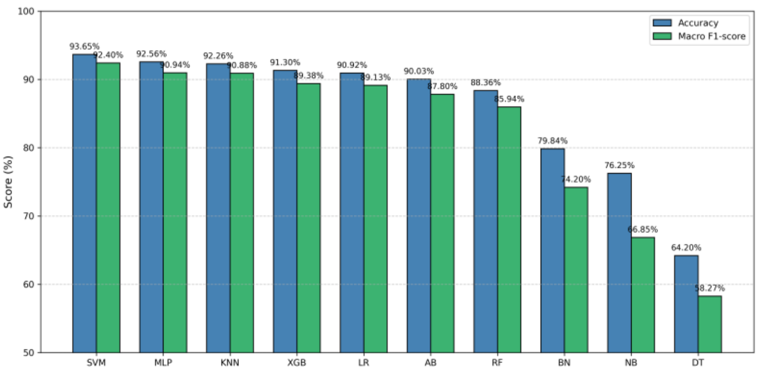

Fig 4: Bar chart comparing accuracy and Macro F1-score for each model (sorted by descending accuracy)

The Support Vector Machine (SVM) achieved the highest classification accuracy (93.65%) and F1-scores, demonstrating its effectiveness for this task. The Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) was a close second, trailing by only ~1%, which suggests that both linear and non-linear classifiers can effectively separate the extracted features. The high ROC-AUC scores (≥ 0.99 for the top four models) indicate that all leading models possess excellent overall discrimination capability between the classes.

The Decision Tree model significantly underperformed (64.20% accuracy), likely due to overfitting in the high-dimensional feature space and sensitivity to class imbalance, despite using class_weight='balanced'. This highlights the limitations of single trees for complex image classification compared to ensemble or margin-based methods.

B. Detailed Analysis of Top Performing Models

To move beyond aggregate metrics, we conducted a detailed diagnostic comparison of the four best-performing models: SVM, MLP, KNN, and XGBoost.

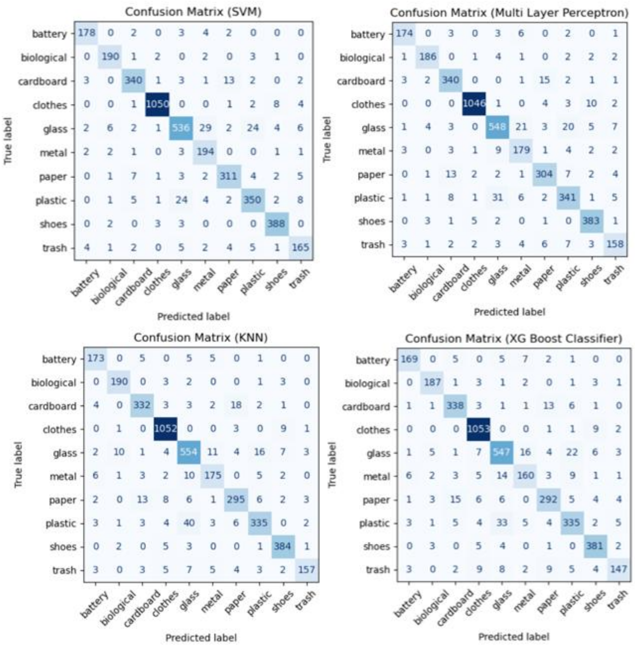

Fig 5: Comparative Confusion Matrices for (A) SVM, (B) MLP, (C) KNN, and (D) XGBoost

This reveals a consistent, underlying challenge across all top models: the misclassification of 'Metal' as 'Plastic' and the diffuse errors associated with the 'Trash' category. For instance, a significant number of 'Metal' samples were consistently misclassified as 'Plastic' by all top models, suggesting a high visual similarity in the feature space. The 'Trash' class, being a heterogeneous category, showed errors distributed across multiple classes. While this pattern is consistent, the SVM model exhibits the darkest diagonal values (correct classifications) and the faintest off-diagonal hues, confirming its superior accuracy in navigating these ambiguities. The MLP shows a very similar but slightly noisier pattern, while KNN and XGBoost exhibit more pronounced off-diagonal elements, particularly for the 'Paper' and 'Trash' classes.

Confusion matrices for the remaining six models (Decision Tree, Random Forest, Naive Bayes, Bayesian Network, AdaBoost, and Logistic Regression) are provided in the Appendix to offer complete transparency while maintaining focus on the highest-performing algorithms in the main analysis.

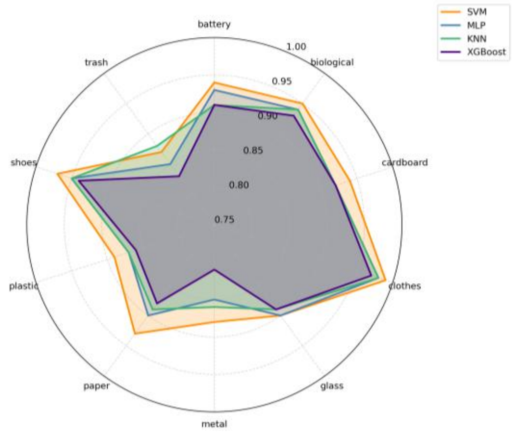

Fig 6: Radar Chart of Per-Class F1-Scores for the Top Models

The radar chart in Figure 6 provides a holistic view of model robustness. It clearly shows that the SVM line encloses the largest area, corroborating its top-tier status. Crucially, it also highlights nuanced strengths:

- All models struggle with 'Metal' and 'Trash', creating a characteristic "dent" in the chart.
- KNN competes closely with SVM on 'Biological' and 'Trash', suggesting its instance-based learning captures useful patterns for these categories.
- XGBoost shows competitive performance on 'Clothes' and 'Shoes', indicating effective handling of textile-related features.

This analysis confirms that while SVM is the best all-around performer, the choice of model can be fine-tuned based on specific class-level requirements.

The SVM's superior performance can be attributed to its effectiveness in high-dimensional feature spaces and robust handling of class imbalance through its margin-based optimization. The RBF kernel's ability to model complex non-linear decision boundaries in the 1,280-dimensional MobileNetV2 feature space proved particularly advantageous for distinguishing subtle visual differences between waste materials.

The persistent metal-plastic confusion likely stems from visual similarities in reflective surfaces and material textures in the image data. This suggests that visual features alone may be insufficient for perfect discrimination between these materials, pointing to the potential need for multi-sensor approaches in industrial applications.

Our results reveal clear performance patterns by algorithm family: kernel-based methods (SVM) outperformed neural networks (MLP), which in turn surpassed tree ensembles (XGBoost, RF), with probabilistic models (BN, NB) trailing significantly. This hierarchy suggests that margin-based optimization is particularly well-suited for the discriminative features extracted by MobileNetV2.

Class	SVM	MLP	KNN	XGBoost
battery	0.94	0.93	0.91	0.91
biological	0.95	0.94	0.94	0.93
cardboard	0.94	0.92	0.92	0.92
clothes	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.97
glass	0.90	0.90	0.89	0.89
metal	0.88	0.85	0.86	0.81
paper	0.93	0.90	0.89	0.88
plastic	0.89	0.87	0.87	0.86
shoes	0.97	0.95	0.95	0.94
trash	0.87	0.85	0.88	0.83

Table 3: Per-Class F1-scores for the Top Models (SVM, MLP, KNN and XGBoost)

The discriminative power of the best-performing model can be further quantified using the Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve.

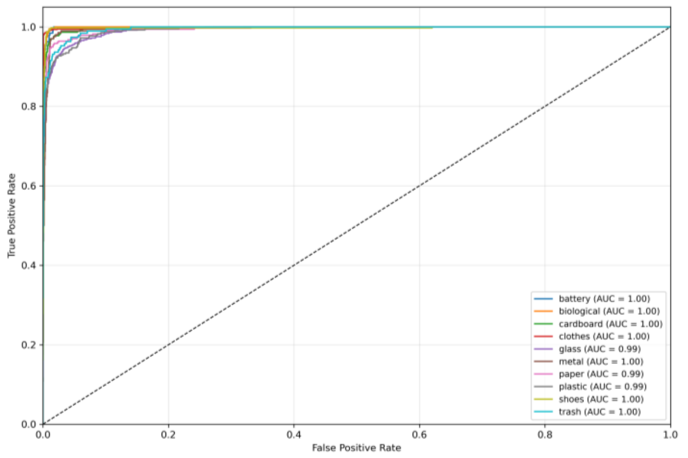

Fig 7: One-vs-Rest ROC Curves for all classes (SVM Model)

The ROC curves demonstrate exceptional discriminative power, with eight classes achieving perfect or near-perfect AUC scores (1.00) and the remaining classes (Glass, Plastic and Paper) maintaining excellent performance at 0.99 AUC. This demonstrates that the SVM model maintains a high true positive rate while keeping a low false positive rate for each individual class, confirming its robust and balanced discriminative power across the entire dataset.

C. Practical Implementation and Model Deployment

To validate the practical utility of our research, we developed an interactive web application using Streamlit. This application serves as a real-world testbed for model deployment, allowing users to upload images of waste and receive instant classifications from multiple models.

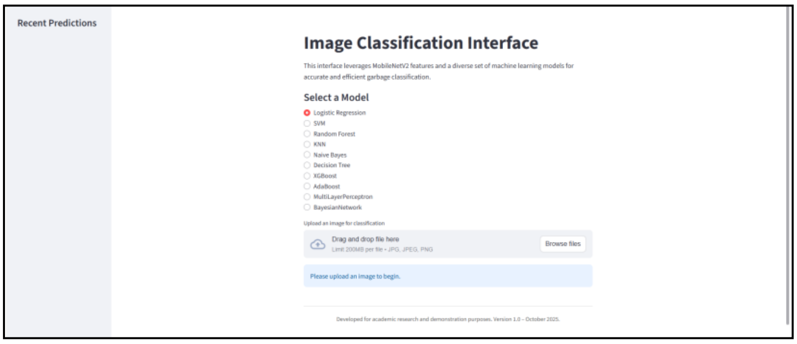

Fig 8: Streamlit application interface for garbage classification, showing the model selection dropdown with all ten implemented algorithms and the image upload panel.

The application provides a comprehensive platform for:

- Flexible Model Selection: Users can choose from all ten implemented machine learning models via an intuitive dropdown interface
- Real-time Classification: Instant predictions with confidence scores enable quick assessment of model performance
- Visual Verification: Full-size image display allows users to verify the input quality and contextual details
- Comparative Analysis: The ability to test the same image across different models facilitates direct performance comparison

Operational testing confirmed our quantitative findings:

- The interface successfully processed diverse waste images with rapid response times
- Logistic Regression and other top-performing models demonstrated reliable classification accuracy on real-world examples
- The system provided interpretable confidence scores that aligned with visual assessment of classification difficulty
- All models maintained consistent performance outside the controlled testing environment

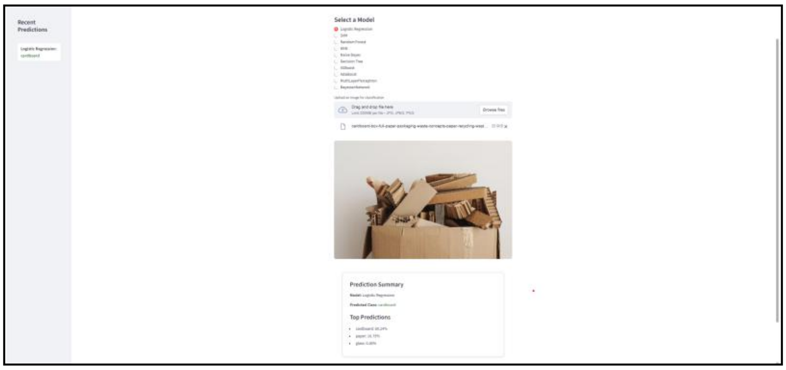

Fig 9: Application in operation showing successful classification of a cardboard waste item using the Logistic Regression model. The interface displays the uploaded image alongside prediction results, including the predicted class and confidence scores for all potential categories, demonstrating real-world functionality.

The application empirically confirms the key trade-off identified in our study: while the Support Vector Machine (SVM) consistently delivers the high-accuracy performance essential for precision sorting tasks, the Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) provides the optimal balance of speed and accuracy for high-throughput, real-time environments. By enabling users to interact directly with these models, the tool demystifies AI-driven waste sorting and provides a versatile platform for both education and prototyping. It stands as a ready proof-of-concept for integration into smart bins, recycling facilities, or public awareness campaigns, effectively bridging the gap between academic research and scalable, real-world environmental solutions.

V. CONCLUSION

This study has presented a comprehensive comparative analysis of ten machine learning algorithms for garbage classification, systematically addressing a critical gap in the literature by benchmarking classical models powered by modern deep feature extraction. The findings robustly demonstrate that classical algorithms, when leveraging transfer learning, can achieve performance competitive with complex end-to-end deep learning models, while frequently offering superior computational efficiency and interpretability.

The research yields two primary, actionable insights for practitioners. First, it provides a clear framework for model selection based on operational priorities: the Support Vector Machine (SVM) for scenarios demanding peak accuracy, and the Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) for applications where an optimal balance of high accuracy and rapid inference is critical. Second, the study underscores that effective handling of class imbalance and high-dimensional feature spaces is not inherent to deep learning alone; strategic techniques like class weighting and specialized preprocessing enabled even probabilistic models like the Bayesian Network to achieve viable performance.

Looking forward, this work establishes a strong foundation for several promising research directions. The persistent confusion between visually ambiguous categories like 'metal' and 'plastic' suggests the potential for incorporating multi-modal data (e.g., spectral or tactile sensors) to augment visual features. Furthermore, the success of this hybrid feature-extraction approach makes it an ideal candidate for deployment on edge devices, bringing intelligent waste sorting closer to the point of disposal. Ultimately, this research provides a validated toolkit and a clear pathway for developing more efficient, scalable, and accessible AI-driven waste management systems.

VI. REFERENCES

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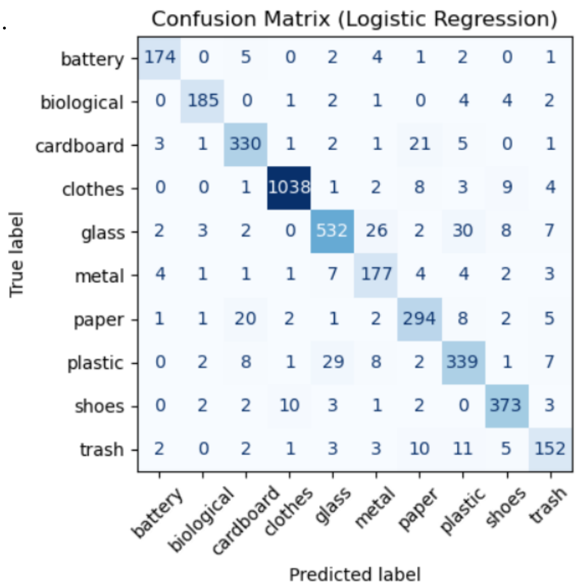
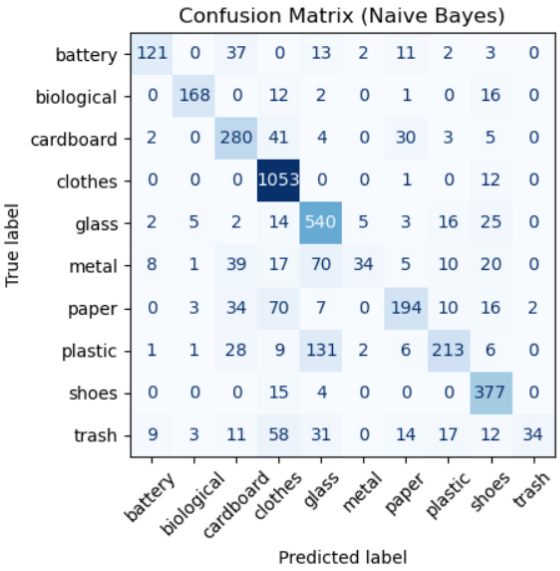
VII. APPENDIX

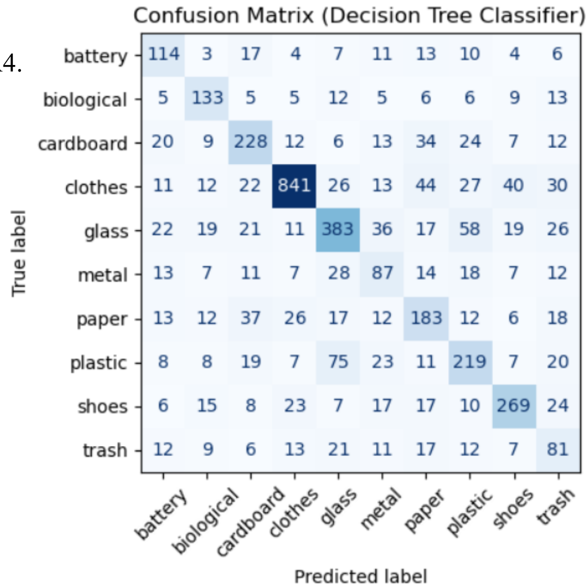
A1.



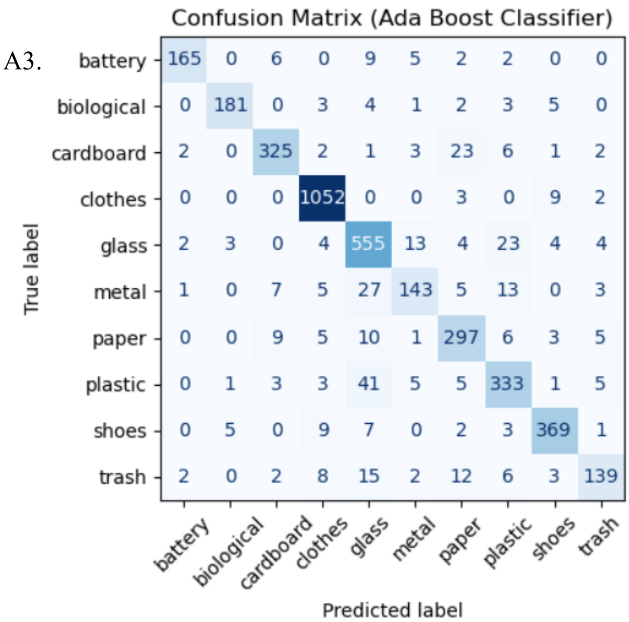
A2.


Confusion Matrix (Naive Bayes)
True label
Predicted label
battery biological cardboard clothes glass metal paper plastic shoes trash
battery 121 0 37 0 13 2 11 2 3 0
biological 0 168 0 12 2 0 1 0 16 0
cardboard 2 0 280 41 4 0 30 3 5 0
clothes 0 0 0 1053 0 0 1 0 12 0
glass 2 5 2 14 540 5 3 16 25 0
metal 8 1 39 17 70 34 5 10 20 0
paper 0 3 34 70 7 0 194 10 16 2
plastic 1 1 28 9 131 2 6 213 6 0
shoes 0 0 0 15 4 0 0 0 377 0
trash 9 3 11 58 31 0 14 17 12 34

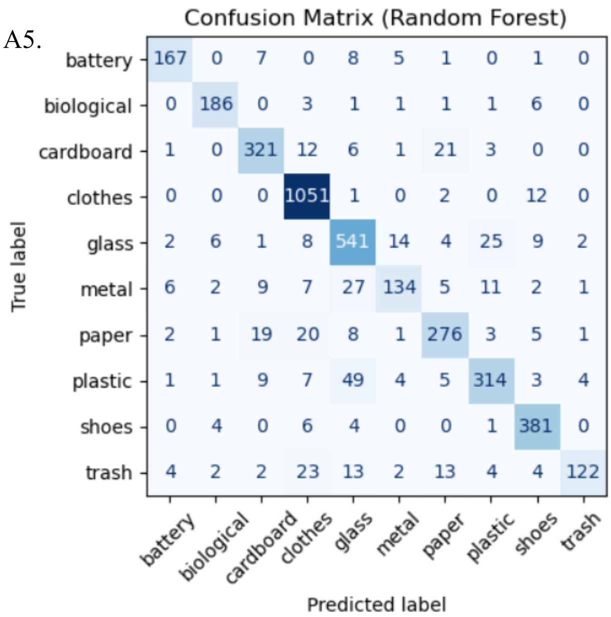
A4.


Confusion Matrix (Decision Tree Classifier)
True label
Predicted label
battery biological cardboard clothes glass metal paper plastic shoes trash
battery 114 3 17 4 7 11 13 10 4 6
biological 5 133 5 5 12 5 6 6 9 13
cardboard 20 9 228 12 6 13 34 24 7 12
clothes 11 12 22 841 26 13 44 27 40 30
glass 22 19 21 11 383 36 17 58 19 26
metal 13 7 11 7 28 87 14 18 7 12
paper 13 12 37 26 17 12 183 12 6 18
plastic 8 8 19 7 75 23 11 219 7 20
shoes 6 15 8 23 7 17 17 10 269 24
trash 12 9 6 13 21 11 17 12 7 81

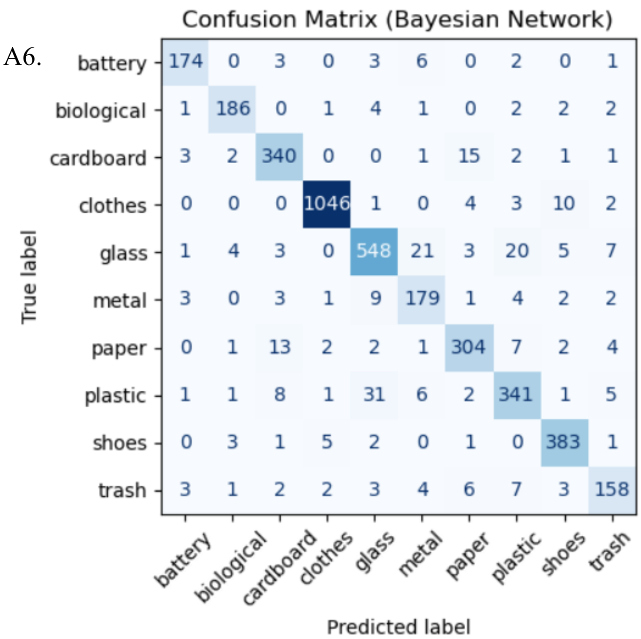
A3.


Confusion Matrix (Ada Boost Classifier)
True label
Predicted label
battery biological cardboard clothes glass metal paper plastic shoes trash
battery 165 0 6 0 9 5 2 2 0 0
biological 0 181 0 3 4 1 2 3 5 0
cardboard 2 0 325 2 1 3 23 6 1 2
clothes 0 0 0 1052 0 0 3 0 9 2
glass 2 3 0 4 555 13 4 23 4 4
metal 1 0 7 5 27 143 5 13 0 3
paper 0 0 9 5 10 1 297 6 3 5
plastic 0 1 3 3 41 5 5 333 1 5
shoes 0 5 0 9 7 0 2 3 369 1
trash 2 0 2 8 15 2 12 6 3 139

A5.


Confusion Matrix (Random Forest)
True label
Predicted label
battery biological cardboard clothes glass metal paper plastic shoes trash
battery 167 0 7 0 8 5 1 0 1 0
biological 0 186 0 3 1 1 1 1 6 0
cardboard 1 0 321 12 6 1 21 3 0 0
clothes 0 0 0 1051 1 0 2 0 12 0
glass 2 6 1 8 541 14 4 25 9 2
metal 6 2 9 7 27 134 5 11 2 1
paper 2 1 19 20 8 1 276 3 5 1
plastic 1 1 9 7 49 4 5 314 3 4
shoes 0 4 0 6 4 0 0 1 381 0
trash 4 2 2 23 13 2 13 4 4 122

A6.


Confusion Matrix (Bayesian Network)
True label
Predicted label
battery biological cardboard clothes glass metal paper plastic shoes trash
battery 174 0 3 0 3 6 0 2 0 1
biological 1 186 0 1 4 1 0 2 2 2
cardboard 3 2 340 0 0 1 15 2 1 1
clothes 0 0 0 1046 1 0 4 3 10 2
glass 1 4 3 0 548 21 3 20 5 7
metal 3 0 3 1 9 179 1 4 2 2
paper 0 1 13 2 2 1 304 7 2 4
plastic 1 1 8 1 31 6 2 341 1 5
shoes 0 3 1 5 2 0 1 0 383 1
trash 3 1 2 2 3 4 6 7 3 158