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Facial Detection and Recognition Analysis using Ontology-Driven Machine Learning Model

Kayode O. Oluborode[a*], Gregory M. Wajiga[a] and Yusuf M. Malgwi[a]

[a]Department of Computer Science, Faculty of Physical Science, Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola, Nigeria

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A B S T R A C T

Facial detection and recognition technologies have achieved remarkable advancements through the integration of ontology-driven machine learning (ML). This study examines how ontology structured framework for representing domain-specific knowledge to enhance the robustness, accuracy, and interpretability of ML models, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), in the field of facial detection and recognition. Acknowledging the limitations of traditional ML methods, such as data inefficiency, inadequate generalization, and insufficient interpretability, this research addresses critical challenges, including semantic discrepancies, variations in environmental conditions, and ethical considerations. By leveraging ontology, the study aims to provide semantic enrichment, contextual adaptation, and data augmentation for ML models. A hybrid methodology is introduced that effectively integrates ontology with CNNs, in conjunction with the Viola-Jones and Eigenfaces algorithms, to improve performance in facial recognition tasks. The study utilizes comprehensive datasets such as CelebA and MegaFace, employing rigorous preprocessing and training processes that incorporate ontology-based feedback mechanisms. The results demonstrated significant improvements in accuracy, robustness, and explainability. Ontology-CNN models outperform traditional approaches in managing variations in facial attributes and environmental conditions. This study concludes that ontology-based frameworks present a promising avenue for developing efficient and ethically responsible facial recognition systems. Future research should focus on exploring the scalability of these models across diverse demographic contexts and further addressing ethical considerations related to privacy and fairness.

1. Introduction

Ontology and machine learning play crucial roles in facial detection and recognition models, as highlighted in the reviewed research papers. Machine learning techniques, such as support vector machines, ResNet, EfficientNet, MobileNet (Saravanan *et al.,* 2024), and Multi-task Cascaded Convolutional Networks (MTCNN) (Jain *et al.,* 2024), are utilized for accurate facial emotion recognition and eye detection. Additionally, the integration of deep learning techniques and data augmentation in Facial Expression Recognition (FER) systems enhances performance and addresses uncertainties in large-scale datasets (Oluborode *et al.,* 2024; Kandil *et al.,* 2024). These advancements contribute to the development of AI-based systems for gender-based targeted advertising through facial detection and classification (Ajani and Nachappa, 2024). Furthermore, the rapid improvement in facial detection technologies is attributed to intelligent algorithms and the continuous exploration of existing techniques (Anusha and Nimala, 2023). The synergy between ontology and machine learning continues to drive innovation in facial detection and recognition systems, paving the way for enhanced human-computer interactions and practical applications in various domains.

The methodology of utilizing ontologies to enhance machine learning algorithms for facial detection and recognition has shown promising results in various studies. By combining ontological structures with machine learning techniques, researchers have achieved high accuracy rates in facial skincare product recommendations (Maduri and Silva, 2024), facial image detection using the Viola-Jones method (Hind *et al.,* 2023), and facial detection through the You Only

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +2348034409227
E-mail address: kayodeoo@mau.edu.ng (Kayode O. Oluborode)
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Look Once (YOLOX) model (Ding and Chen, 2023). Additionally, the use of ontologies has been proven effective in automatically generating features for machine learning algorithms, improving accuracy in activity recognition tasks (Salguero *et al.,* 2018). Furthermore, the integration of ontologies with machine learning approaches like Histogram Orient of Gradients has enhanced facial recognition systems, leading to reduced fraud and forgery rates (Singh and Prakash, 2022).

Overall, the incorporation of ontologies in machine learning methodologies for facial detection and recognition has demonstrated significant potential in improving accuracy and efficiency across various applications and it is aim to *build a model that can provide explanations for their predictions and decisions.* The research was motivated by the integration of ontology with machine learning into the field of facial detection and recognition due to powerful semantic models that provide more context and meaning to facial data and to reduce the excessive datasets training by representing relationships between facial features (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth) and external attributes (e.g., emotions, age, gender). It is posed to address *variations in facial expressions, lighting conditions, occlusions, and diverse demographic characteristics, as well as offers a promising avenue to address challenges by providing a structured representation of facial attributes, relationships, and contextual information. This allows facial recognition systems to go beyond mere identification and include deeper, more semantic understanding.*

2. Related Works

Machine learning algorithms that are informed by ontology, improve accuracy in computer vision through the use of semantic similarity measures and embeddings that leverage previous knowledge and structured data. Wu *et al,* (2021) propose a conceptual framework to combine computer vision and ontology approaches for semantic safety evaluations using visual data. This framework formalizes safety requirements with ontology and Semantic Web Rule Language (SWRL) rules. Filali *et al,* (2019) suggested an image classification method based on ontology combined with Hierarchical Max-pooling model (HMAX) features for training visual feature classifiers using ontological links. Furthermore, Filali *et al,* (2020) presented an ontology grounded image annotation system using HMAX features refining images labels through merging hypernym and hyponym classifier results. Ding *et al,* (2019) enhanced combining ontology knowledge models with typical picture recognition technology to improve their high-level semantic recognition and reducing training sample requirements. Nikolopoulos *et al,* (2012) put forth a way of probabilistic inference and the hypothesis testing that mixes both statistical and explicit knowledge based on Bayesian network. Prabhas *et al,* (2023) suggested an approach to ontology-based scene graph construction and reasoning using SWRL, which constructs entities and relationships from observed objects for machine readable explanations of image sequences as well. Ontological ABox claims were also investigated during the training and deployment phases, resulting in high precision in machine learning models (Muhammad *et al.,* 2017). Some hybrid techniques have been proposed for bettering image categorization and annotation. Alaa El-deen *et al,* (2022) presented a hybrid recommendation system that merges data-driven, knowledge-driven recommendations with personalized ontologies. Clopas *et al,* (2023) proposed error propagation on forest picture categorization through hybrid ontology bagging approach based on ensemble techniques and CNN models. Ghidini *et al,* (2019) investigated methods of improving Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) algorithms using quantitative and ontology-based approaches. With reference to satellite imaging-related problems in digitized pathology, Lomenie and Racoceanu (2012) emphasized the synergy between AI and ontology tools in this field. Applications in a variety of disciplines have proved the effectiveness of ontology-integrated approaches. Zand *et al,* (2016) introduced OBSIS, a semantic picture segmentation technique that employs a Dirichlet process mixing model to reduce feature dimensionality. Poslad and Kesorn (2014) presented an image retrieval system for the Multi-Modal Incompleteness Ontology-Based (MMIO) framework. Xie *et al,* (2020) created ontology-driven approaches for security requirement categorization and object recognition, demonstrating the importance of ontologies in a variety of domains.

3. Research Methodology

Incorporating ontologies with CNNs in computer vision enhances facial recognition by using deep learning for feature extraction, semantic segmentation for object labeling, and integrating pre-trained models and knowledge graph embeddings to improve accuracy and context-awareness with enriched datasets like Labeled Faces in the Wild (LFW), CelebA, and MegaFace. The following steps need to be observed in other to achieve the attributed method:

Step 1: Ontology Development

This paper developed a comprehensive ontology that defines facial attributes, features, and relationships. This ontology covers aspects of facial landmarks, expressions, age, and occlusions. Utilize methodologies from ontology engineering (*Noy and McGuinness, 2001)* to ensure the ontology's completeness and expressiveness. Figure 1 represent ontology-based feedback technique in a data flow diagram

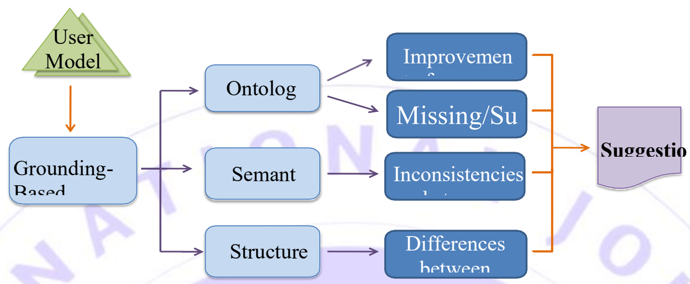

Figure 1. Data flow diagram of the ontology-based feedback techniques (Euzenat and Shvaiko, 2007)

Step 2: Dataset Collection and Annotation

This study collected diverse facial image datasets such as Labeled Faces in the Wild (LFW), CelebA, and MegaFace. Annotate these datasets with ontological concepts, including facial landmarks, expressions, and identity attributes. Moreover, tools like OpenCV for facial landmark detection and manual annotation for fine-grained attributes.

Step 3: Ontology-Driven Data Augmentation

The ontology to generate synthetic facial images and augment existing datasets was utilized. Leverage ontological relationships to create variations in facial attributes, expressions, and occlusions. Techniques such as conditional Generative Adversarial Network (GANs) can be employed for realistic image synthesis based on ontological constraints.

Step 4: Feature Extraction and Representation

Extract features from facial images using deep learning architectures such as CNNs. Design feature extraction pipelines that incorporate ontological knowledge to guide the selection and fusion of relevant facial attributes. Techniques like attention mechanisms can be employed to focus on salient ontological features.

Step 5: Ontology-Driven Machine learning for computer vision Models

Machine learning algorithms for facial detection and identification that use ontological representations. Incorporate ontological constraints into the model's architecture, loss functions, and training procedure. Techniques such as knowledge graph embeddings utilized in (Wang *et al.,* 2018) were used to incorporate ontological knowledge into neural network models. These are integrated with computer vision algorithms such as Viola-Jones for facial detection and EigenFaces for facial recognition. The following steps are observed to implement the integration idea:

1. ***Face Detection using Viola-Jones:*** Viola-Jones detects faces efficiently using Haar-like features and a cascade of classifiers. The algorithm proceeds use Haar-like features, which are simple rectangular filters, to extract features from images efficiently via integral images. It employs a cascade of weak classifiers, each acting as a simple decision stump based on Haar-like features, to quickly eliminate non-face regions and identify potential face regions. This cascade model allows for efficient and rapid face detection by combining multiple weak classifiers to create a strong classifier.

2. ***Face Recognition using EigenFaces:*** Eigenfaces represent faces as linear combinations of principal components extracted from a training set of face images. The algorithm uses Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and applied it to a training set of face images to generate eigenfaces, which represent the principal components that capture the most variance in the data. Each face image is then represented as a linear combination of these eigenfaces. For face recognition, the process involves classifying the faces by identifying the nearest neighbor within the eigenface space, effectively matching each face to its closest representation based on the derived eigenfaces, it simply model in following analysis*:*

i. Let X be the matrix containing all the face images in the training set, with each column vector representing a flattened face image
ii. Perform PCA on X to obtain the eigenfaces U
iii. For a given test face image I, project it onto the eigenface space: $I_{proj} = U^T(I - \mu)$, where μ is the mean face ventor.
iv. Compare I_{proj} with the projected faces of the training set to find the closet match

3. ***Integration Techniques:*** The process begins with Region of Interest (ROI) extraction using the Viola-Jones algorithm to detect faces in images or video frames, which are then preprocessed through normalization, alignment, and resizing for Eigenfaces-based recognition. By fusing the results of Viola-Jones detection with Eigenfaces recognition, the system enhances its accuracy and robustness. Further, a classifier, such as a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN), is trained using the reduced-dimensional representations and ontology-informed features for improved facial recognition. The integration of ontological information into this framework facilitates semantic reasoning and context-aware decision-making during the detection and recognition process.

4. ***Overall Workflow of Activity Diagram***

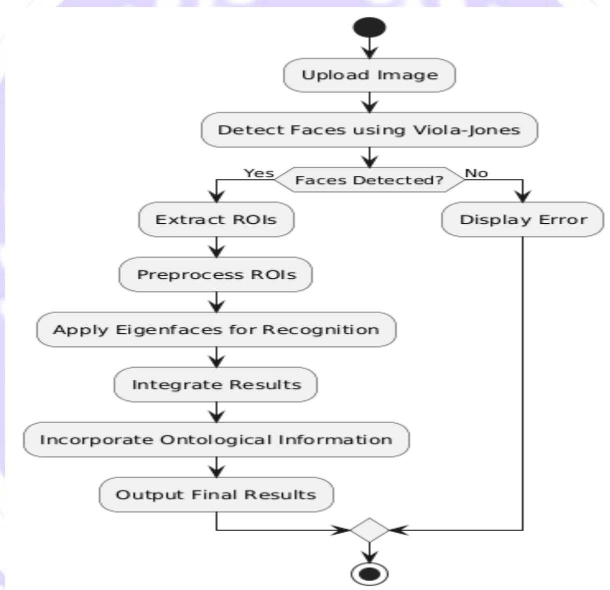

Figure 2. Activity Diagram

By integrating Viola-Jones for efficient facial detection and Eigenfaces for robust facial recognition, and incorporating techniques such as ROI extraction, preprocessing, and ontology-driven reasoning, a comprehensive system for facial detection and recognition can be developed, leveraging the strengths of both algorithms.

Step 6: Evaluation and Validation

Evaluate the proposed model on benchmark facial recognition datasets using standard performance metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Conduct thorough experiments to assess the impact of ontological knowledge on model performance and generalization capabilities.

Step 7: Integration with Existing Systems

Integrate the developed ontology-driven facial detection and recognition system with existing applications and frameworks. Ensure compatibility and interoperability with popular machine learning libraries such as TensorFlow and PyTorch.

Step 8: Performance Optimization and Deployment

Optimize the computational efficiency and memory footprint of the proposed system for real-time deployment. Employ techniques such as model pruning, quantization, and hardware acceleration to enhance performance on resource-constrained platforms.

Step 9: Ethical Considerations Documentation

Address ethical concerns related to facial recognition technology, including privacy, bias, and consent. Implement mechanisms for transparent and responsible use of facial data, and adhere to ethical guidelines, regulations and documentation.

3.1 Model

The subsequent presentation outlines the mathematical model for face recognition, followed by a demonstration of the consecutive steps based on the fundamental equations. This elucidation serves to establish the mathematical basis for the face recognition model.

Equation 1 is faces image vector which represent each face image in the database as represented as a feature vector:

$$\mu = (\mu_1, \mu_2, \mu_3, \dots, \mu_k)^T \quad (1)$$

where:

- μ is the feature vector of an image, consisting of k features (such as pixel values, brightness, etc.).
- T denotes the transpose of the vector, meaning μ is a column vector.

This vector allows us to quantify and compare the features of different face images.

Equation 2 determine which class a given input face belongs to; it represents distance function that compares the feature vector μ_l of the input face with the feature vectors μ_s of faces in the database. The distance function is:

$$d(\mu_l, \mu_s) > d(\mu_j, \mu_s), i \neq j, i, j = 0,1, \dots, L-1 \quad (2)$$

where:

- $d(\mu_l, \mu_s)$ is the distance between the feature vectors μ_l and μ_s.
- The goal is to find the class X_L such that the distance function is maximized, meaning the input face is closest to the class X_L compared to any other class.

The system assigns the input face to a class if the distance between the input face and the registered class exceeds a pre-defined threshold T_c as $d(\mu_l, \mu_s) > T_c$

If such condition holds, the input face is classified as belonging to class X_L. The threshold helps filter out incorrect matches.

Equation 3 is the integral image technique that used to speed up the calculation of pixel intensities in different regions of the face image. The integral image is defined as:

$$I_i(x, y) = \sum_{i=1}^{x,y} i(x, y) \quad (3)$$

where:

- $I_i(x, y)$ is the value of the integral image at coordinates (x, y).
- $i(x, y)$ is the intensity (brightness) of the pixel at (x, y).

This allows for quick computation of the sum of pixel intensities within any rectangular region of the image.

Equation 4 distinguish features, the sum of pixel intensities in white areas is subtracted from the sum of intensities in black areas:

$$S_i = \sum_{i=0}^{x,y} \tau_i k - \sum_{i=0}^{x,y} \tau_i f \quad (4)$$

where:

- $\tau_i k$ represents the brightness of pixels in white regions.
- $\tau_i f$ represents the brightness of pixels in black regions.
- S_i is the difference between these sums, which is used to identify facial features.

AdaBoost method for classifier improvement were introduced in Equations 5, 6, 7.

Equations 5 further explained AdaBoost combines weak classifiers to form a strong classifier. A weak classifier makes a decision based on a threshold:

$$W = \begin{cases} 1, if\ f_i \geq T_{ci} \\ -1\ if\ f_i < T_{ci} \end{cases} \quad (5)$$

where:

- f_i is the feature value for a given face.
- T_{ci} is the threshold.
- W is the classification decision: 1 (positive classification) or -1 (negative classification).

Equations 6 further explained the final strong classifier that weighted sum of weak classifiers:

$$W = \begin{cases} 1, \sum_{c=1}^{C} a_c w_c \leq \frac{1}{2} \sum_{c=1}^{C} a_{ci} \\ 0, \sum_{c=1}^{C} a_c w_c > \frac{1}{2} \sum_{c=1}^{C} a_{ci} \end{cases} \quad (6)$$

where:

- w_c is the weak classifier.

Equations 7 further explained the weight of the weak classifier.

$$a_c = \log \frac{1}{\beta_c} \quad (7)$$

where:

- $a_c = \log \frac{1}{\beta_c}$ is the weight of the weak classifier.
- β_c is the error rate of the weak classifier.

The weighted sum of weak classifiers produces a strong classifier that minimizes classification error.
Equation 8 illustrate the illumination mode that accounts for variations in lighting by normalizing the brightness values:

$$qj(x, y) = \frac{g_{0,j}(x, y)}{g_{1,j}(x, y) + 1} \quad (8)$$

where:

- $g_{0,j}(x, y)$ and $g_{1,j}(x, y)$ are the brightness values of the pixel at (x, y) under different lighting conditions.
- $qj(x, y)$ is the normalized brightness, which helps the algorithm recognize faces under various lighting.

Variance and Dispersion are both calculated in Equations 9 and 10
The model measures the variance or dispersion of brightness values to account for differences in lighting and facial appearance:

$$D(I_{0,j}, I_{1,j}) = \frac{1}{WH} \sum_{x=0}^{H-1} \sum_{y=0}^{W-1} (q_j(x, y) - q_{j)}{}^2 \quad (9)$$

where:

- $D(I_{0,j}, I_{1,j})$ is the variance between the brightness values $I_{0,j}$ and $I_{1,j}$.
- q_j is the mean brightness value, computed as:

$$q_j = \frac{1}{WH} \sum_{x=0}^{H-1} \sum_{y=0}^{W-1} (q_j(x, y) \quad (10)$$

This dispersion helps the system adjust to varying lighting conditions by normalizing brightness values. In mathematical terms, the face recognition model uses a combination of feature vectors, distance functions, integral images for speed, and the AdaBoost algorithm to improve classification accuracy. It also handles variations in lighting through brightness normalization and variance calculations. The result is a system that can efficiently and accurately detect and classify faces under various conditions.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Building Ontology

The detected idea and relations are structured in classes hierarchy which includes classes like “Face”, “Facial Feature”, and “Facial Expression”, also properties which signify particular examples of classes, instances, all these are expressed in Figure 3.

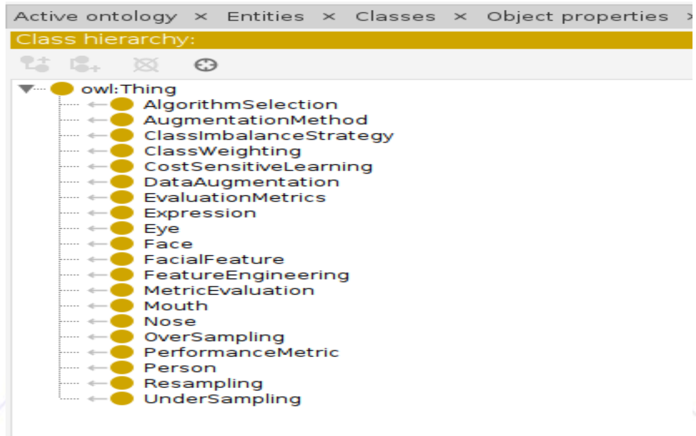

Figure 3. Show Ontology Structure

Figure 3 represent classification of classes in an ontology viewer using Protégé. At the top of the hierarchy is owl:Thing which is the basic class of the Web Ontology Language (OWL) into which all other class are subclass of. The classes AlgorithmSelection, AugmentationMethod, ClassImbalanceStrategy, ClassWeighting, CostSensitiveLearning, DataAugmentation, and EvaluationMetrics denote some strategies and methods of machine learning with the focus on class imbalance problem, algorithm selection, data augmentation, and evaluation. Classes such as Expression, Eye, Face, FacialFeature, Mouth, and Nose point to a computer vision use of the ontology.

It combined with facial recognition algorithms such as Viola-Jones and Eigenfaces to improve the reliability and versatility, in security systems among others. Documentation and maintenance guarantee the updates of the data in the ontology; with updates made depending on new knowledge and developments in technology. This process ends with dissemination of the ontology to the community that can work further with it, aiming at standardization of similar activities that can help the industry to progress and improve facial recognition technology.

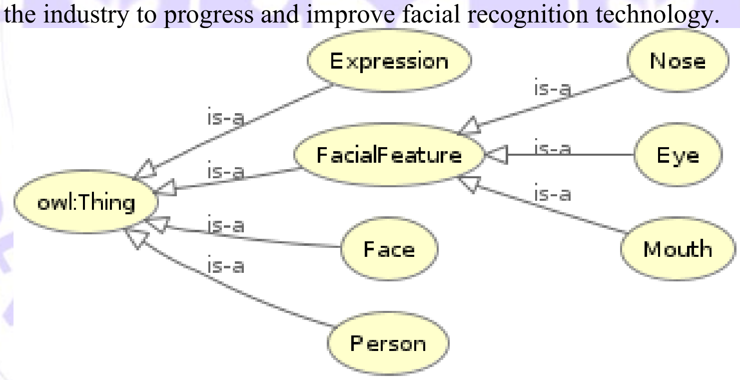

Figure 4. Ontology Class-Based Structure

The Figure 4 presents a fragment of an ontology developed with the help of Protégé 5.4 – one of the most popular environments for constructing ontologies. Ontologies are explicit formal specifications of a particular domain, usually used in artificial intelligence and knowledge engineering to model and to reason on.

4.2 Description of Ontology-CNN Model

The Ontology-CNN model enhances computer vision tasks by integrating structured ontological knowledge with traditional CNN architectures. Ontological information, including hierarchical categories and contextual relationships, is incorporated through an ontology embedding layer using vectors or Graph Neural Networks. The model fuses this knowledge with learned features via methods like feature concatenation, attention mechanisms, or conditional computation, resulting in more context-aware processing. Trained with enriched labeled data, the model is particularly effective in applications like facial detection and recognition, improving accuracy, generalization to unseen data, and interpretability by leveraging known relationships and hierarchies.

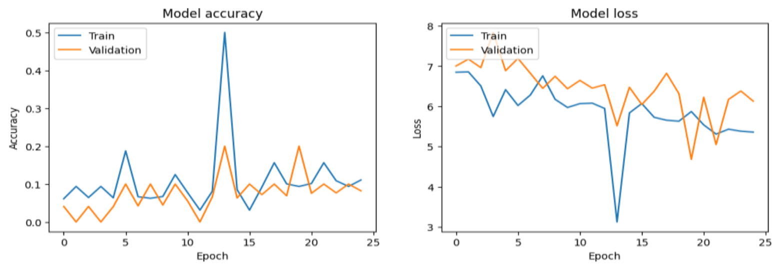

Figure 5. Ontology-Informed Machine Learning Model Training

Figure 5 represent two-line graphs that illustrate the model's training and validation accuracy and loss over 25 epochs. The left graph shows training accuracy (blue line) and validation accuracy (orange line), with the training accuracy displaying significant fluctuations and a notable spike around epoch 11, indicating potential overfitting issues or noisy training data. The right graph presents training loss (blue line) and validation loss (orange line), both showing a general downward trend but with noticeable fluctuations. The training loss drops significantly around epoch 12, suggesting improved learning at that point, but the validation loss remains inconsistent, further indicating possible overfitting or variability in the validation set.

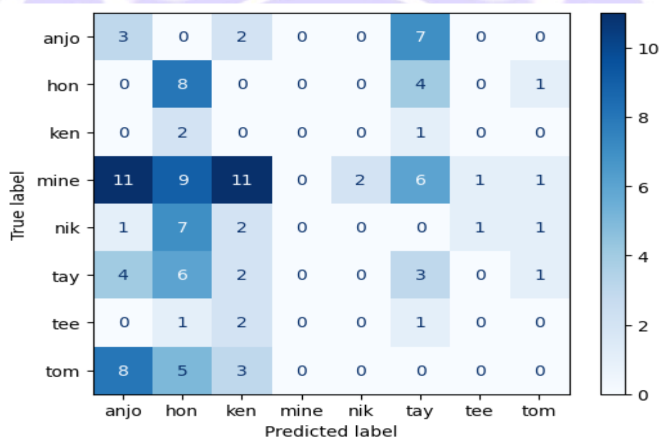

Figure 6. Model Confusion Matrix

Figure 6 presented the confusion matrix for the model's predictions across eight classes reveals significant insights into its performance. Each row represents the actual class, while each column represents the predicted class, with diagonal elements indicating correctly classified instances. The model struggles with most classes, correctly predicting "hon" eight times but failing to classify "ken" and "tom" even once. This indicates a heavily skewed and inconsistent performance, suggesting a need for better training data balance or model adjustments.

The matrix reveals frequent misclassifications, such as "anjo" often being predicted as "tom" and "mine" as "ken" and "hon." These misclassifications highlight issues with either the dataset's distribution or the model's ability to generalize across different features.

To improve accuracy, it is recommended to enhance the training dataset through augmentation to balance class distribution, fine-tune the model architecture, conduct error analysis to address specific misclassification issues, experiment with different hyperparameters, and enhance feature extraction techniques. Addressing these aspects can lead to more balanced and reliable predictions across all classes, improving the model's overall classification accuracy.

a. *Sample Datasets*

Figure 7. Image Datasets across LFW, CelebA, MegaFace and local source

The image presented in Figure 7 shows the samples of dataset of the headshots includes photographs of 30 different people where the gender, age, ethnicity, and even their emotion are different across the aforementioned four sources. That is why such a variety is useful when training facial recognition models as it not only allows to train under different conditions thus improving the generalization of the model but also minimize the chances of possible bias.

4.4 Integrating image with ontology template

Figure 8 represent screenshot of a web page displaying a user interface for the model application. The text on the screen states **"Integrating Image with Ontology"** and provides two interactive buttons:

1. **Choose File:** This allows the user to upload an image file.
2. **Run Ontology:** This trigger a process that integrates the uploaded image with an ontology model.

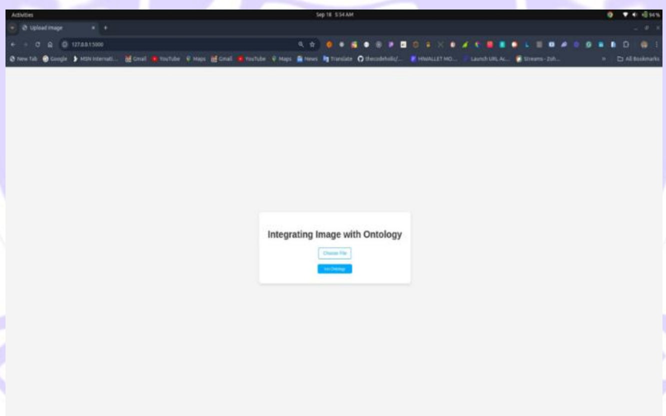

Figure 8. Integrating image with ontology template

The model application is running locally, indicated by the address 127.0.0.1:5000 on the browser's address bar, which is a localhost IP address. The model is basically designed for an ontology-related process to give analysis report or summary of relationships between facial features and extract facial landmarks (e.g., eyes, expressions, and positions), by integrating the image data with a knowledge-based model of semantic analysis of facial ontology for better accuracy and context in recognition.

b. *Image Analysis Result*

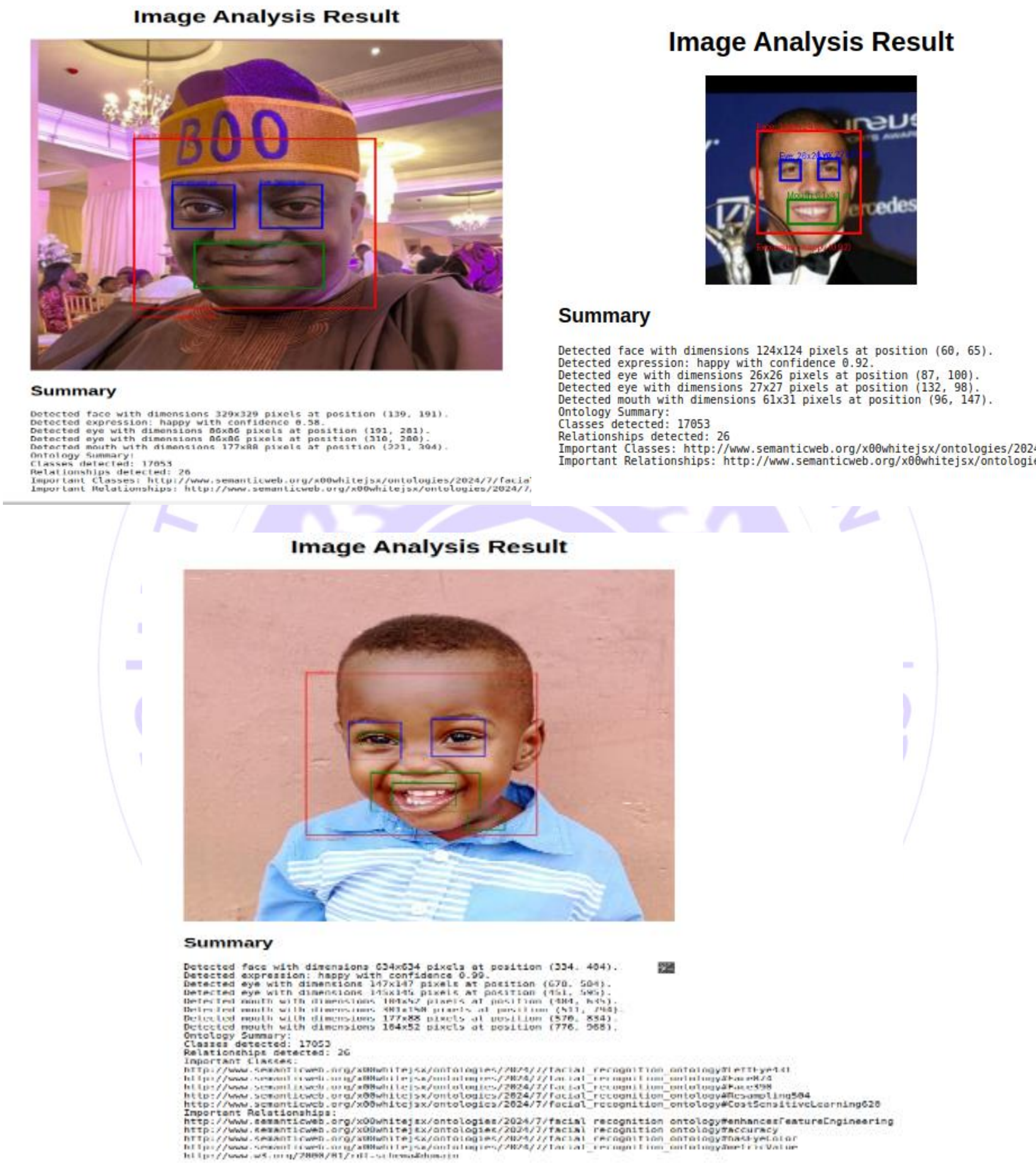

Figure 9. Recognized faces with its ontology analysis

c. Performance Evaluation

Additional to the above findings, the figure 8 below shows various models and their performance in various aspects. The first picture shows two bar graphs that demonstrate the VGG16, ResNet50, InceptionV3, and an Ontology-CNN Model by accuracy, inference time, and size. In the left graph used in this work, the two series are inference time, which is shown with blue bars, and accuracy, which is described as yellow bars. The inference time for VGG16 is the highest but slightly lower accuracy compared to the others hence showing that it is not well-optimised while the Ontology-CNN Model shows the least inference time but high accuracy thus being optimised for its performance.

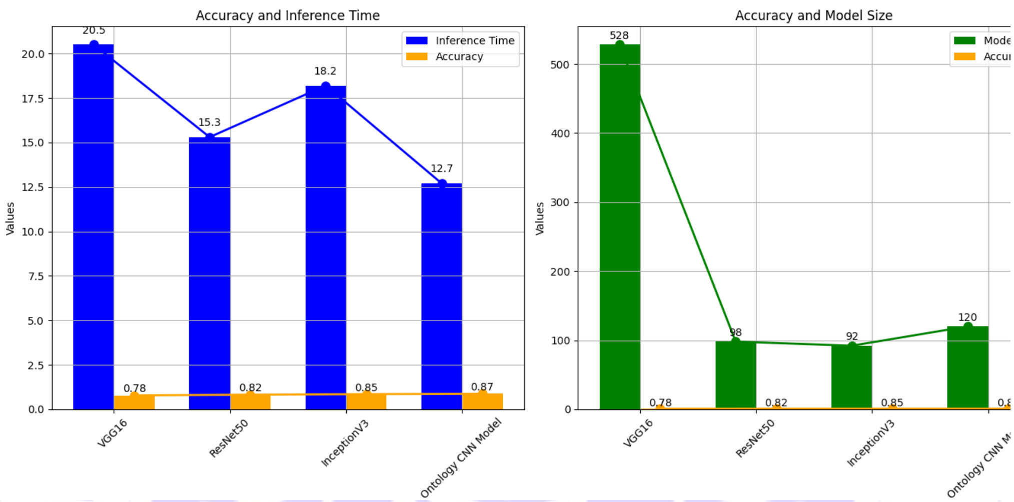

Figure 10. Model performance metrics

Figure 10 represent the performance evaluation which provide a comprehensive analysis of various models and their performance metrics. The first image displays two bar graphs comparing the VGG16, ResNet50, InceptionV3, and an Ontology CNN Model in terms of accuracy, inference time, and model size. In the left graph, the blue bars represent inference time, and the yellow bars represent accuracy. VGG16 shows the highest inference time with relatively lower accuracy, whereas the Ontology CNN Model has the highest accuracy with the lowest inference time, indicating it is well-optimized. The right graph compares model size (green bars) and accuracy (yellow bars). VGG16 is the largest model but has the least accuracy. In contrast, the Ontology CNN Model, although larger than ResNet50 and InceptionV3, achieves higher accuracy, suggesting a good balance between size and performance.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, these analyses provide a clear pathway for improving ontology-informed machine-learning models for facial detection and recognition. By focusing on domain-specific knowledge, refining training processes, and ensuring balanced predictions, the result aims to create robust, accurate models capable of reliable facial recognition. These findings emphasize the need for ongoing evaluation and adjustment, ensuring the models remain effective in real-world applications. The study's objectives, including model designing, extracting algorithm rules, building explanatory models, and evaluating performance, are all reflected in these detailed analyses, supporting the overall aim of enhancing facial recognition through ontology-informed machine learning.

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