ABSTRACT
The study was carried out in Gakenke District in the northern province of Rwanda. The overall objective of the study was to investigate the causes of poor performance in mathematics in primary schools in Gakenke District with special reference to the responsibilities of education stakeholders. To achieve this objective and answer, research questions, the study employed descriptive research design which included a total of 130 respondents from five low achieving primary schools and five high achieving primary schools which participated in the study. Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were used to collect data which were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The major findings of the study were that school based factors and non school based factors and non school based factors that are causes of poor performance in Mathematics in primary schools in Gakenke District. On the other hand, the school based factors included adequacy of teaching and learning materials, teachers’ punctuality, language used in teaching Mathematics, completion of mathematics syllabus, enjoyment of mathematics lessons, teachers’ qualification, organization of in-service training, school infrastructure and average class size. On the other hand, the non school based factors included lateness and absenteeism, help students at home, provision of basic needs by parents, distance travelled to school, and involvement of parents in Parent-teacher Association. However, the study found out that primary school girls achieve in Mathematics at the same level at low primary school boys and the difference in Mathematics achievement increases as adolescence progresses. On the basis of the findings, the study recommends that regular sensitization meetings about the value of education to children should take place. Through this method, the community and the nation can contribute a lot to eradicating causes of poor performance in mathematics in primary schools in Gakenke District.