**Question: Discuss Gandhiji’s theory of Trusteeship. (2016)**

**Introduction**

Gandhi believed that everyone has own a capital should feel that he is a trustee of the capital, which belongs to the society as a whole. The people should realize that everyone should posses only that much of capital and property which is needed by them. No one should use capital disregard to collective social interests. He said that everyone should have balanced diet, a good house to live, facility for education and adequate medical relief. Everyone should believe that everything belonged to God. There is no idea in appropriating money from capitalists to the workers, if the former behaved property for collective social interest.

**Meaning**

The Gandhian Principle of Trusteeship is closely related to the "Social Responsibility of Business".  
According to the Gandhian Concept of Trusteeship, "All business firms must work like a Trust." All assets of the firm must be held by a 'trust' and must be used for the welfare of the society. The firm must keep only a small part of its profits for the honorable livelihood of its owners. The remaining part of the profit must be distributed equitably to all sections of society. Mahatma Gandhi was influenced by Ancient Indian Philosophy and teachings of holy Bhagavad Gita.

**Aim of Trusteeship**

1. **To Promote Relationship:** Trusteeship is the very stuff of life, the material of which life is made because life ultimately consists of relationships. There is no life without relationship. Relationship is the essence of life and trusteeship is calculated to promote relationship among men.
2. **Neighborliness in all walks of life:** That's the basic idea on which the scheme of trusteeship has been based. It is not merely neighborliness in certain walks of life, because in Gandhiji's concept, life could not be divided into water-tight compartments. Life has been conceived as whole, which cannot be divided into compartments. So trusteeship is not merely for business relations, but for all relationships of men as they go in everyday affairs of life.
3. **A means of Radical Social Change:** There is one more aspect of trusteeship. Trusteeship is a means of revolution or radical social change. Trusteeship is designed with a view to eliminate the distance between men and bring them, not only in body but also in mind, as close together as possible.
4. **Change of heart:** Trusteeship was Gandhiji's peculiar contribution to the technique of social change. He called it "the technique of change of heart." Expropriation, confiscation and taxation are not calculated to conduct to this change of heart. Gandhiji is often quoted as saying that in the Ram Rajya of his dream the status of the prince and the pauper will be the same.
5. **Mutuality and Well-being:** Trusteeship does not conceive of a society in which the poor shall remain poor and the rich shall remain rich. Both poverty and affluence for a few shall be eliminated. Mutuality and well-being shall be the rule of the society, in which men learn to live together in goodwill for one-another. That's trusteeship as I understand it and that is trusteeship as I think Gandhiji enunciated. Gandhiji was not, obscurantist, nor did he stand for statism. He believed in antyodaya -'the coming up of the last man.
6. **Change of Attitude of Businessmen:** According to Mahatma Gandhi, businessmen should change their attitude. They have no morale right to accumulate unlimited wealth while most of their countrymen live in poverty and misery. He should distribute the remaining wealth back to the society.
7. **Socialism:** This concept gives more importance to socialism. That is, the society is given much more importance than an individual. So, the wealth of the society should be distributed equitably to all its members.  
   Consider Social Needs: Businessmen should produce only those goods and services which are useful for all members of the society. They should not produce goods and services, which are used only by few individu

**Criticism**

Gandhiji’s Ideas of trusteeship have been criticized from different angles on the ground that these are not progressive and applicable in society.

1. This concept is not relevant in today's competitive business world because every businessman tries to earn maximum profits and accumulate huge wealth.
2. It de-motivates the hardworking businessmen. The businessmen will lose their creativity, and they will become lazy. This will slow down the economic development of the country.
3. This concept is based on the concept of Socialism. However, today socialism is outdated.
4. Businessmen feel that the welfare of the society is not their responsibility. It is the responsibility of the Government.
5. This concept is not accepted by shareholders who invest their money to earn the highest dividend.
6. This concept is against capitalism. Today, capitalism is proving very successful all over the world. Poverty levels are very low in capitalist countries when compared to the poverty statistics of socialist nations.

**Conclusion**

From the above explanation it can be concluded that trusteeship of Gandhi has some drawbacks. But here it should be noted Gandhi expounded his concept to minimize the gap between rich and poor. His view was that property should not concentrate in the hands of few men He wanted the common welfare of all people living in society. Through his trusteeship he desired to bring close relationship among the people.