

high commercial value, since they are used in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Therefore, the handling of bats for trading purposes poses a considerable risk of transmitting zoonotic CoV epidemics (139).

Due to the possible role played by farm and wild animals in SARS-CoV-2 infection, the WHO, in their novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation report, recommended the avoidance of unprotected contact with both farm and wild animals (25). The live-animal markets, like the one in Guangdong, China, provides a setting for animal coronaviruses to amplify and to be transmitted to new hosts, like humans (78). Such markets can be considered a critical place for the origin of novel zoonotic diseases and have enormous public health significance in the event of an outbreak. Bats are the reservoirs for several viruses; hence, the role of bats in the present outbreak cannot be ruled out (140). In a qualitative study conducted for evaluating the zoonotic risk factors among rural communities in southern China, the frequent human-animal interactions along with the low levels of environmental biosecurity were identified as significant risks for the emergence of zoonotic disease in local communities (141, 142).

The comprehensive sequence analysis of the